

**Popular Education Praxis  
For Cultivating Biocultural Diversity Experiences**

**The case of the Asociación Jardín Botánico Las Delicias:  
A community based-model in Colombia-South America**

by

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A Major Project Report  
submitted to the Faculty of Environmental Studies  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

York University, Toronto, Ontario, Canada

January 23, 2018

## **Foreword**

**The components of my Plan of Study (PoS)—Biocultural Diversity, Indigenous Knowledge and Popular Education—formed an interlocking triad that built the conceptual and methodological structure of my major project. This threefold strategy is represented in this project, which fulfills the objectives of my PoS.**

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\*Photos of workshops were taken by Fabio Gonzalez, Sandra Leon

\*All images used are taken from non-copyrighted online sources

## Acknowledgments

Thanks to the Faculty of Environmental Studies, for giving me the chance to join the Master's program. I experienced it as a meaningful learning place in which to examine environmental issues from an inclusive, interdisciplinary and social justice approach. There, I found a space to regain my academic confidence. I met wonderful people, teachers and classmates, from whom my social and environmental accountability was greatly enriched.

Thanks to my dear friend Carmen Ocampo for the wisdom, love, and confidence she shared with me throughout the program. Carmen hermosa, tu mirada fresca y asertiva que teje matices esenciales para crear significados nuevos, ha sido un faro a lo largo de este viaje. Infinitas Gracias por motivarme tomar esta maestría y por tu gran apoyo a lo largo de este proceso Te quiero mi Kr.

Many thanks to my supervisor, popular educator Chris Cavanagh for guiding me through this process. Without his valuable advice and insight I would have lost sight of the horizon. Chris, I don't know what I would have done without your counsel and aid. I appreciate you not only as a great popular educator, but as a warm human being who held me together many times when I felt I was falling apart. Your encouragement to overcome my lack of confidence and your trust in my work were essential to recognizing myself in the eyes of the others, to give myself permission to express my human vulnerability, and of course, to design this project and walk along popular education's path of theory and practice.

Thanks to my Adviser, Professor Felipe Montoya, who cleverly guided the structuration of my PoS learning strategies and objectives. Querido Felipe, agradezco inmensamente tu credibilidad en mí propuesta y el gran apoyo académico a través de tu visión, aportes y enfoques. Estos definitivamente fueron semillas de conocimiento que dieron absoluta claridad, forma y sentido a mi proyecto de investigación. Gracias también por haberme escuchado pacientemente cuando sentía que perdía el rumbo y por haber estado siempre ahí...simplemente dando fuerza y esperanza!

Thanks to my classmate and friend Seema Shenoy, who gave me love and patience when I most needed it. Dear Seema, your dedication in the editing this report showed me that there are still people who give unconditionally. I'm aware of my limitations with English, so I admire your ability to interpret my words and synthesize them. I have no words to express my gratitude for your time and energy. Besides, your emotional support made me see you as more than a text editor, but a great woman whom I immensely admire. I honor our friendship.

Immense Gratitude to my children Cami, gracias for taking care of my home, kittens and plants when I was in Colombia, and for your insight and ideas for this project. You know very well how I structure ideas in Spanish, and you helped me better articulate what I wanted to express in English. Zaja, gracias hija for your camaraderie when I needed to take a break. You were there listening to my dramas and concerns about not finishing this project in time. Thanks hija por animarme a creer en mí.

**Special Thanks:** Muchas Gracias, unkua unkua, to the Misak Native Community and the Peasant People of the Asociación Jardín Botánico Las Delicias, who, in spite of their many struggles, continue to survive and flourish. Their belief in the inherent right to live a good life is their only certainty to continue forward on this path....



*If you don't dare to leave, why do you  
yearn so eagerly to arrive?*

*-Taita Javier Calambas Tunubala-*



## Not-An-Intro

*I feel that if by the luck of being alive, I am revisiting those places of yesterday with renewed wisdom ... hmm...I am undeniably enchanted...The passage of time is narrating itself in another time...!*

*The freshness of the Andean wind,*

*The verdant slopes of the mountains,*

*The Arrayán's enchanting fragrance*

*The old cedar, hundreds of years older than us,*

*The mesmerizing colors of tropical flowers,*

*The cows on the edge of a ridge,*

*The attentive gaze of the horses, inspecting my trembling and awkward footsteps,*

*And a hummingbird flapping there...very close to my silence and my sighs...*

*Oh Dios...Oh my goodness!, as it is said in the Eagle's land.*

*Is it possible for such beauty to be true? Si! They were the first to come to welcome me.....!*

*But wait...wait for a minute...something is missed here...*

*What about my beloved human family in the Condor's Terra! ...?*

*Walking at the Andean's, the native people of the South also came to say hello...They greeted me with the joy of someone who knows as you do, the soul commitment that connects us....*

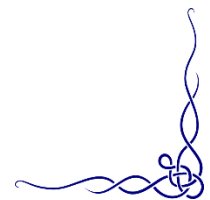
*I had come back, but in a way I had never left. I was just in recess!*

*Now, at the other side of the sea in the North, I do not even know why I am writing all of this! Perhaps it is because there in the South, a verse constantly trailed my thoughts: "I had never left this land. I had never gone away. The one who left her home has already returned ..."*

*I was there... With a backpack full of joy, hope and a great anticipation of the re-encounter...What greater bliss than to lie on the sward together to salute the father Sun without worries ...My mother used to say, 'Esta vida es un paseo' (this life is a trip)...*

*Suddenly, I remember that I have a final report to end, videos, photos and appendixes to organise, a deadline approaching in less than a month's time and a master's degree on hold!*

*...As it is said in the Eagle's Land: Oh my goodness! What am I going to do? Might the goodness of the Andes' Condor fly to me to save my life...?*



## A Note to the reader

### On the length of this report

This report exceeds the allowed word count of 30,000 words by approximately 7000 words. However, I would like to justify this choice based on both the methodology and ethics of this particular project, as I intend not just to describe the activities undertaken as part of the project—the content, but also the design and implementation of popular education praxis within the project—the process. Through an ethnographic approach that supports this objective, I make use of thick description to situate this work within the lived realities of the community that is part of this project. Thick description as a *process* refers to “the detailed account of field experiences in which the researcher makes explicit the patterns of cultural and social relationships and puts them in context” (Holloway, 1997)<sup>1</sup> As an *output*, it is “a way of writing that includes not only description and observation...but also the context in which the observations are made, including the details, emotions, and webs of social relationships” (Badenhorst, 2015). As such, my description of the popular education journey is narrated through the participants’ own voices (accounting for the lengthy quotes in each chapter). I choose this mode of presenting information as I am convinced that people’s stories and learned experiences—reported by them—are a valid methodological strategy to give an account of their challenges and struggles. At the same time, it serves to decolonize academic writing, which is predominantly carried out in an elite intellectual language that presupposes the “right” way to present theoretical work. Giving prevalence to community voices is a call to legitimize other methods and ways of producing knowledge that are both culturally diverse and methodically sound.

I have also included my own reflections and musings in take-away sections called ‘Pishinde Time’<sup>2</sup>; in one way these excerpts serve as a model of different ways of constructing and expressing knowledge—a guiding principle in developing and executing this project. The first one and last two are observations made during the writing process. The others (in Chapter 3) are excerpts from my field journal.

Thus, this detailed report represents a holistic approach to research, which is especially relevant for working in indigenous contexts. For a more conventional reading of the report, I direct the attention of the reader to Chapter 1 for background information, and Chapter 3 for a description of the activities.

Finally, if you wish to exclude reading Chapter 2 as well as the Pishinde time sections, the text is then

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.qualres.org/HomeThic-3697.html>

<sup>2</sup> *Pishinde* is a native word that describe a state of stillness and tranquility (Pi=water, Pishin=fresh or relaxed, and de=so it is). It describes a person’s emotional, physical and /or mental state of being in peace.



approximately the allowed maximum of 30,000 words

### **Translation**

- I have made every effort to accurately translate the quotes I gathered from the bilingual indigenous participants. However, some of their original meaning may be lost due to the limitations intrinsic to the process of translation.

- This report includes a number of words and concepts in the native Namrik language. An English translation is included in parenthesis following the word/phrase or in footnotes, according to the most accurate translation from the Spanish.

### **Motifs**

-Between each chapter you will find the image of a *mochila*, a handmade bag that is an important cultural symbol of the Andean people, and is used to carry food and personal belongings. I use the *mochila* as a metaphor to suggest that each chapter is packed with its own ideas and reflections. My hope is to instil a sense of curiosity in the reader each time they encounter a *mochila*: what does this bag contain...? Similarly, in the chapter that describes the daily activities, at the end of each day's description, I use the image of a spindle (also commonly used by indigenous people) to symbolically compare the rod to an axis around which ideas (r) evolve: in the final reflection, the day's activities are 'spun around' this axis to be analysed.



## INTRODUCTION

*Reading is not walking on the words; it's grasping the soul of them.*

-Paulo Freire<sup>3</sup>-

The purpose of this report is to present the results of my MES research project. Through a thick description<sup>4</sup> it gives an account of the objectives, methods, and research strategies developed during the project, carried out from April 3 to July 8, 2017 in Colombia. It also summarizes, elaborates and reflects on key themes that emerged during the process.

The project proposal was designed to strengthen the resurgence of a Biocultural Community-Based Model (BCBM) headed by indigenous people and farmers of the Asociación Jardín Botánico Las Delicias (AJBD), a non-profit socio-environmental organization in the southwestern Andean highlands of Colombia in South America.

In the last decade, the organization was threatened and debilitated by the Colombian armed conflict that ravaged the country. In the period following the signing of the peace treaty<sup>5</sup>, the community has sought to revive the AJBD. Since my intention was to support this initiative through my research proposal, this project used a *Participatory Research Epistemology* to design a methodological structure to orient and reinforce community capacity building to envision what kind of resources are needed in order to reactivate the BCBM.

At the core of the participatory research process, popular education methods help communities apply their knowledge, while strengthening their capacity to analyze their reality, articulate their problems and priorities, and use the information they generate to carry out the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of projects. This methodology places community needs at the forefront while empowering the agency of people involved. It uses popular education methods to encourage revitalization of the local community's traditional knowledge. Thus, participatory research is used to create an ethical intercultural space in which community knowledge, ideas and arguments can be expressed.

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<sup>3</sup> The quotations at the beginning of each chapter are taken from Paulo Freire's "Pedagogy of the Oppressed" (Freire, 1970)

<sup>4</sup> A method of writing was popularized by anthropologist Clifford Geertz in the 1970s (see following section: A note to the reader).

<sup>5</sup> In November, 2016, the Colombian government and the main rebel group (FARC) signed a peace agreement. The agreement is currently being implemented at a slow but steady pace, a result of the processes through which bureaucratic institutions operate.

The strategy employed in this project was initiated through recognizing and delineating the context of the Asociación Jardín Botánico Las Delicias by revisiting its past and present experiences and anticipating a potential future. The approach for planning, identification and documentation was prepared under a popular education method called *Sistematización*<sup>6</sup>. *Sistematización*, a Spanish word that means Systematization, more formally refers to the evaluation of a research process in conventional academic terms, and is primarily focused on getting results. But popular education's use of **sistematización** permeates the whole process of research development and is thus interested in understanding the *processes*, not just the results. The different nuances of *sistematización* are used according to different cultural contexts. For this project, I worked with the Spiral Model of Seize the Moment (STM), a popular education tool that includes seven circular steps directed to political analysis for social change.

I have documented the events and experiences throughout the development of the project not only to present a 'technical or academic report' but importantly, to serve the AJBD's needs. Therefore, and bearing in mind the circular approach of STM, once I have collated all of the information, it will be presented to the community to be evaluated and refined with them. In this manner, my work may be considered a pedagogical tool that incorporates a threefold strategy: identification of relevant elements that were observed, analysis of processes (and the relationships among them), and evaluation of learned experiences.

The structure of this report responds to different events that constituted the project<sup>7</sup>. Although they are organized chronologically, they may be useful in any other order, according to the community's interests. Beyond a mere summation of events, this report is expected to support not only the research project 'objectives,' but also my argument about the effectiveness of popular education strategies in 1) identifying and critically analyzing cultural and environmental issues and/or potential, and 2) documenting processes that enable biocultural diversity conservation at the local level.

This report consists of five chapters:

**Chapter 1. Background Information:** This chapter contains contextual information about the AJBD and includes: 1) The AJBD's social composition and location; 2) Origins of the Biocultural Community-Based Model "Θsik Waramik PurΘk Tapshik," its vision and objectives; 3) An

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<sup>6</sup> The *sistematización* approach will be explained in detail in Chapter 2.

<sup>7</sup> Although in my research proposal I had originally planned a series of three popular education workshops followed by community meetings to evaluate the experience through a collective *sistematización*, due to a community conjuncture I became involved in other duties, supporting the AJBD with technical, administrative and organizational matters for two specific projects (See Chapter 4).

examination of the community's struggles and opportunities and; 4) Lived experiences in the recuperation of historical collective memory: My personal history with AJBD.

**Chapter 2. Popular Education Approach and Design:** This part refers to the methodological approach and the planning of project activities. I discuss the main popular education approaches that were relevant to, and shaped, the particular design of my project and the activities carried out at the series of workshops with the community: *participatory research; the ludic dimension of popular education; seize the moment; and systematization* (sistematización, in Spanish). These methods worked together to create the Spiral Model of popular education that helped situate the project within the particular social and cultural context of the ABJD and its members, and establish the basis for a long-term self-sustaining model of reflection and action.

**Chapter 3. Activity Report<sup>8</sup>:** This chapter chronologically presents the three-day popular education workshop activities where the community revisited their past and present experiences and laid out future plans and initiatives for the AJBD. At different events, the community used a variety of popular education tools, allowing them to identify and understand their most relevant concerns.

**Chapter 4. Apropos of seizing/naming the moment/Sistematizacion: A happy coincidence.** Here I describe how I supported the community in obtaining funds from two projects, and securing inter-institutional support for the AJBD. The first project is funded by the Global Environmental Facility through the United Nations in Colombia, and the second by the Colombian Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Tourism. I also discuss how these projects and networking activities will serve to reactivate the BCBM.

**Chapter 5. Learned Experiences:** This chapter brings all the pieces together to discuss the major findings of the research project. I explain how the spiral model worked in this project and describe what I learned through the process of planning and execution, including the main contributions—individually and collectively—of the three components of my PoS: Biocultural diversity conservation framework; Indigenous knowledge; and participatory research methodology.

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<sup>8</sup> The activities of each day are summarized at the beginning before moving on to a thick description.



## Chapter 1

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

*One cannot expect positive results from an educational or political action program which fails to respect the particular view of the world held by the people. Such a program constitutes cultural invasion, good intentions notwithstanding. -Paulo Freire-*

#### 1.1 Asociación Jardín Botánico Las Delicias: Social Composition and Location

The Asociación Jardín Botánico Las Delicias (AJBD; or Las Delicias Botanical Garden) is comprised of an inter-cultural group of indigenous people, peasants and mestizos in Colombia. Most AJBD members are part of two rural communities in El Departamento del Cauca (The Department of Cauca): a majority of them (50 individuals) are indigenous people, belonging to the Misak-Wampi ethnic group (known as Guambiano), who live in the Resguardo Indígena de Guambia in the municipality of Silvia (with a total population of ~20,782: National Census, 2015). The peasant members include 10 individuals from La Vereda Rio-Socio in the municipality of Inza, where forced displacement has left only five survivor families in the area.

The Department of Cauca, where a vast majority of Colombia's indigenous, peasant and black populations reside, represents the most diverse ethno-cultural region of the country. But it is also one of the most devastated in ecological, political, social and economic terms, recording historical massacres and widespread human rights violations. The inhabitants, who live in rural areas of low agricultural productivity, continue to struggle to claim their ancestral rights to land, and overcome injustice, marginalization and poverty. However, the region's history of struggle has also caused it to emerge as the epicenter of social movements in the country, such as the *Indigenous National Movement* that has historically lead the fight for land recuperation, the return of stolen land and the repudiation of privately owned land to indigenous territories. On the other hand, it has also been the birthplace of insurgent indigenous groups and has had a strong historical presence of armed (guerrillas and paramilitary) groups.

The AJBD is located in an area in the rainforest in the southwestern highlands of the Cauca Department (Maps 1, 2, 3), which forms part of the Andean Biosphere<sup>9</sup>, the Pacific Biological Corridor, and the Colombian Massif. This matrix of ecosystems hosts a diversity of landscapes, flora and fauna, and plays an important ecological role in the recycling and storage of rainwater, particularly in the Páramos (high-altitude tundra/grasslands)<sup>10</sup>. Competing pressures on land

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<sup>9</sup> <http://www.unesco.org/mabdb/br/brdir/directory/biores.asp?mode=all&code=COL+01>

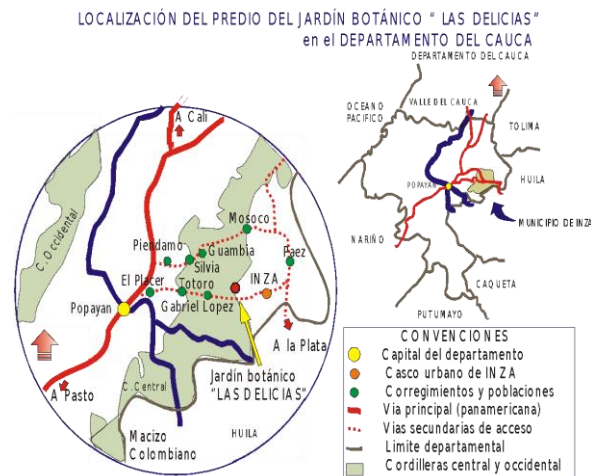
<sup>10</sup> See definition of Páramo Ecosystem : <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/P%C3%A1ramo>

and natural resources, including prospecting, mining, the expansion of the agricultural frontier and conversion of forestland to pastures, have severely impacted these ecosystems. The impacts of the decades-long internal armed conflict have also taken their toll.

Most AJBD members earn their daily sustenance from small-scale agriculture and livestock production. The issues they face have been compounded by the war, their continued marginalization and disenfranchisement, and the degradation of the natural ecosystem. Poor agricultural land management of an already unproductive land, and increasing prices of agricultural inputs in a precarious economy makes it difficult for them to meet the demands of daily expenses. Most of the youth rely on their parents to pay for their studies. Others sell crafts and artisanal products or find temporary jobs in local businesses and/or manufacturing industries.

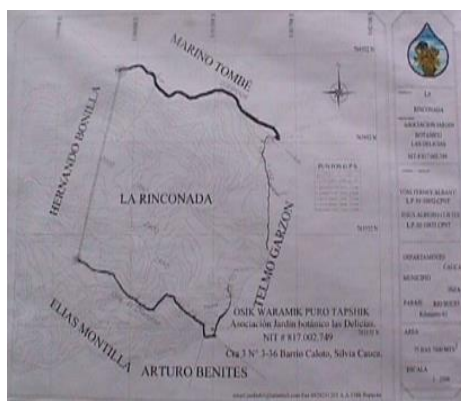


Map 1: "Political map of Colombia" Source. Wikipedia



"Regional location of AJBD"  
Created by Eliana Santa Cruz & Sandra Patiño

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Map 3: "AJBD's area-perimeter and boundaries"  
Created by Instituto Geográfico Agustín Codazzi Popayán, Cauca.

<sup>11</sup> Plan Maestro y Diseños Paisajístico y Arquitectónico para una primera etapa del Jardín Botánico "Las Delicias" en la vereda Rio Socio, Municipio de Inza, Departamento del Cauca. 2003.

## 1.2 Origins of “*Əsik Waramik PurƏk Tapshik*”: The Biocultural Community-Based Model

The Asociación Jardín Botánico Las Delicias was conceived as a Living School of Nature and designed as a Biocultural Community-Based Model called “*Əsik Waramik Purək Tapshik*” in Namrik, the native language of Misak people. It is a broad cultural concept that is difficult to translate, but may be expressed as a place to live a good life for the wellbeing of the multiplicity of beings that coexist in a territory: humans, animals, plants and the spirits of nature. The concept of *Əsik Waramik Purək Tapshik* enabled the AJBD to develop its organizational approach, which was founded on a strategy to improve local livelihoods and wellbeing, while recognizing and legitimizing their inherent rights to participate in processes of environmental protection, an intrinsic part of their cultural permanence.

The establishment of the AJBD<sup>12</sup> as the first intercultural botanical garden led by indigenous people and peasants in Colombia was acknowledged by conservationist, academic and government agencies at the local, national and international level. The first endorsement came in 1999, when the Colombian National Network of Botanical Gardens and the Alexander Von Humboldt Institute<sup>13</sup> recognized the importance of this initiative for conservation and provided it with technical support and academic resources.

In the following years, other institutions extended their support: the Ministry of the Environment, through Corporación Regional del Cauca (CRC), its regional office offered technical aid; in 2002, the organization acquired 74 hectares of Andean rainforest in the Vereda de Rio Socio to establish the botanical garden; and between 2002 and 2004, El Fondo Para la Acción Ambiental, an international fund, sponsored the AJBD through its first phase. Some of the important activities and outcomes from that period are listed below.

### *At the Ecological level*

To safeguard local biodiversity, the following activities were initiated: flora and fauna inventories; ethno-botanical and botanical identification; rescue and conservation of native species; infrastructure for the care and propagation of species at risk of extinction; mapping of different ecological areas of the Botanical Garden; creation of trails; recycling campaigns (~10 tons of

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<sup>12</sup> In Colombia, conventional botanical gardens are managed under Law 299/96 which stipulates the three principles of 1. Environmental Conservation, 2. Scientific Investigation, and 3. Environmental Education. Congreso Nacional de Colombia, Bogotá, Julio de 1.996. [http://www.minambiente.gov.co/images/normativa/leyes/1996/ley\\_0299\\_1996.pdf](http://www.minambiente.gov.co/images/normativa/leyes/1996/ley_0299_1996.pdf).

<sup>13</sup> The highest authority of environmental conservation in Colombia.



glass was taken out of the Piendamó River); production of organic fertilizers; artisanal products from native species (creams, jams, soups, shampoos and traditional drinks, e.g. coca-wine).

#### *At the Socio-Cultural level*

The involvement of the local community contributed to and fulfilled socio-cultural objectives: validation of elders' knowledge; empowerment of indigenous and peasant women; active participation of youth and children<sup>14</sup>; involvement of men from the local community<sup>15</sup>; inter-institutional management; and publication of project results.

Although the AJBD met the western parameters that define the constituency of Botanical Gardens worldwide, it marked a big difference from similar institutions. While conventional gardens are often located in big cities and run by western scientists, the botanical garden Las Delicias was located in-situ in an Andean rainforest and led by people who lived and depended on the local ecosystem, and who brought their traditional knowledge to conservation practices.

### **Mission**

The AJBD's mission is to develop a comprehensive intervention at the community level in order to improve quality of life through the conservation of the Andean rainforest ecosystem. Seeking to achieve basic objectives in the fields of conservation, education and environmental research, the AJBD strives to enrich the natural and human resources present in the area. Through the strengthening of ancestral practices and the promotion and participation of local communities in the identification, analysis and solution of environmental problems, the AJBD hopes to create a culture of vitality and sustenance around the existing resources in the community, especially its natural heritage.

### **Vision**

The AJBD believes that the participation of local communities is crucial to change the world, as traditional practices and native spiritual knowledge are key to a holistic practice of environmental protection.

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<sup>14</sup> 27 children and teenagers were involved in the ecological theater.

<sup>15</sup> 25 adults (men) were trained in environmental education.

## Objectives

The objectives of AJBD are:

- To be globally recognized at the first ethno-botanical garden / community-based model in South America that is based on a holistic notion of the wellbeing of people and ecosystems, through a Living School of Nature.
- To recover traditional knowledge, values and practices related to the sustainable use of biodiversity of the rainforest ecosystem.
- To empower the participation of local communities in processes of environmental research, education, conservation and decision-making.
- To design environmental, agricultural and ecotourism strategies within a consolidated self-sustainable community model.

### 1.3 Examining the Struggles and Opportunities

More than 50 years of the armed conflict in Colombia has negatively impacted the wellbeing and livelihoods of rural communities, who depend on local ecosystems to survive. The intrinsic dynamics of the war have permanently uprooted small farmers from their land while causing socio-cultural erosion and environmental degradation. This is the case of the AJBD as well, which had to suspend its activities 12 years ago due to the armed conflict. Although being recognized as the first community-led Botanical Garden in Colombia based on cultural recovery for ecological protection was a promising start, the war and consequent displacement interrupted the participation of the local community and functioning of the organization. The imposed period of inactivity meant not only a collapse of opportunities to recuperate values to strengthen cultural identity, but also the abandonment of participatory actions to mitigate the harmful impacts of environmental degradation, which only increased during the conflict.<sup>16</sup>

After five years of intense dialogue and peace negotiations between the government and insurgent groups, on November 16, 2016, the Colombian government and FARC (Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia) guerrilla officially signed a peace treaty that was expected to end the conflict. Taking advantage of this political moment, the AJBD now wants to revive its biocultural community-based model. Its members propose that restoring this initiative

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<sup>16</sup> As we identified in an initial assessment of AJBD's 'First Reactivation Assembly' meeting (via Skype, on April 15, 2016), changes in the weather, and food and water shortages are in fact the inevitable interconnected realities affecting both livelihoods and ecological cycles among the Andean people who live in fragile ecosystems such as Páramos and rainforests.

will not only encourage the socio-cultural resurgence of the community, but that it might eventually compensate for the social, cultural, ecological and economic damages of the war.

Since I had been a cofounder-activist member of the AJBD, I was invited to collaborate with, and help support, the reactivation process. By linking the community's requirements with my own research interests at the MES program, I was thus able to design a project to develop the *conceptual basis and methodological structure* to support the reactivation of the AJBD's Biocultural Community Based-Model.

#### **1.4. Lived Experiences in the Recuperation of Historical Collective Memory: My Personal History and Story within AJBD<sup>17</sup>:**

*No one is born fully-formed: it is through self-experience in the world that we become what we are.* -Paulo Freire-

It is my observation that in response to the particular socio-political dynamics in Latin America, marginalized people in the region have developed radical strategies of resistance in order to survive. I can relate this to my own experience. I lived and worked for about seven years in the southwestern region of Colombia where indigenous and peasant communities, devastated by the impacts of the armed conflict between paramilitary and guerrillas groups, struggled to survive under the social, political and environmental effects of the war. As an ally of rural communities' struggles, I helped initiate the AJBD's educational practices aimed at both local livelihoods and ecosystem protection and to strengthen community self-affirmation. An important part of our educative efforts was to identify the multiple forms of oppression and create strategies to resist them.

Looking back at that experience, I can say that it was a long and difficult, but enriching, journey of knowledge; a propitious stage where the dynamic processes of teaching and learning simultaneously converged. It provided us tremendous lessons for both personal and collective growth. We settled new concepts, theories, and perspectives; and importantly, we developed the ability to create innovative and practical methodologies of learning. By embodying and living through the complex realities of our



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<sup>17</sup> This reflection is part of my Final Paper for the course on Popular Education, winter 2016, at the MES Program, York University.

everyday lives, we learned the skills of analytical and critical thinking in an unorthodox way. While literally working in middle of the crossfire, as the conflict progressed, so did our ability to develop survival strategies in response. As we were embarked on that journey together, we learnt how to design popular, traditional, and critical knowledge, practices and actions to endure. Grounded on principles such as unity, solidarity, reciprocity and generosity, our epistemological and methodological path was built from, and in response to, everyday challenges. We used the philosophical principles inherent to the indigenous culture such as: **Mayele** (Everybody is different but interconnected – humans and nonhumans), **Linchap** (companionship) and **Lata-Lata** (to give and receive).

After our daily activities we would usually come together around the **Nachak** (campfire) to warm our bodies and spirits; to illuminate our minds and give thanks for the day that had passed. Sometimes around the fire, sometimes in middle of the forest, we revisited traditional methods of planning and



evaluation based on the idea of **Consejos Comunitarios** (Community Councils). Collectively, we reflected on that day's achievements and obstacles, as we planned our activities for the next. Although we were sometimes uncertain about how to move forward or how to deal with circumstances, we usually found the 'right' path. Through journeying together, we learned from each other and learned to trust in each other...

I had to learn how to multitask by performing different social and administrative tasks (organizing community gatherings, planning activities, coordinating teams, organizing logistical support for trainings and workshops) and academic and institutional labors (developing inter-institutional relations, writing proposals and reports and participating in scientific events and meetings). It was a wonderful opportunity to enhance my intellectual curiosity and open up my intercultural mind as I coordinated the activities of different groups from different backgrounds. I engaged with traditional knowledge, the natural sciences, social studies disciplines, artistic expressions and technology, all blending in to dissolve the historical conceptual separations that existed between them. The interdisciplinary and communal interplay gave rise to a dialogue to help us understand how to approach socio-environmental challenges, not from segregated points of view, but from a collaborative dimension. Here, knowledge was generated from the margins, from the struggles, from the pain, and also from the joys of being able to invent new pedagogical strategies for resilience and social transformation. These teachings are still alive, deep in my heart...Rooted as vital seeds of openness, and a desire for freedom....

When I arrived in Canada twelve years ago, I had to let go of the deep connections I had forged with the community and the land. I came with many uncertainties, but also with a great hope of reaching a

safe place that would give me the security and human integrity I was denied in my own country. Apart from my material possessions, my 'baggage' also contained great expectations of a promising future on the one hand, and countless memories and questions about my past on the other...

Through my engagement with popular education (Pop-Ed) at York University, I have realized the political dimensions of storytelling and the importance of personal experiences in social processes of transformation. Although I had previously used participatory and anti-colonial methods, I did not have the opportunity to study the theoretical framework of anti-oppressive pedagogies in depth. Pop-Ed teachings have helped me recognize, and critically think about, how the telling of personal stories serves as a mirror, reflecting the hardships of millions of people around the world who struggle to survive in the midst of oppressive systems. On a very personal level, the *sistematización* of this experience has been very useful to soften and release painful memories. It has also given me the analytical tools to appreciate the strength and wisdom gained from it. Pop-Ed has certainly provided a significant ethical space, where I could let my past experience count, and start to find my own voice, to be heard and in some way to regain my self-confidence. This pedagogical space has opened a door to reconnect my past with my present and likewise to move forward and continue bringing out my true potential and passions, creativity and skills, by re-validating my lived experiences as a constructor of knowledge. It has even brought back my radical desire to restore balance and wellbeing in this world.



ENVS 6150

Popular Education for Social Change



## Chapter 2

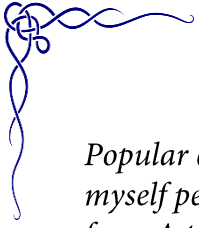
### PROJECT APPROACH AND DESIGN

*[A]part from inquiry, apart from praxis, individuals cannot be truly human. Knowledge emerges only through invention and re-invention, through the restless, impatient, continuing, hopeful inquiry human beings pursue in the world, with the world, and with each other. -Paulo Freire-*

The proposal's research strategy acknowledged the cultural diversity within the Asociación Jardín Botánico Las Delicias (indigenous, peasants and metis), with the intention of building communication between indigenous knowledges and western critical approaches. It therefore explored socially just decolonizing methodologies that challenge hegemonic knowledge production practices that deny local community agency.

The main goal of the proposal was *to collaboratively generate the organic, conceptual and methodological structures with the Asociación Jardín Botánico Las Delicias that would guide the reactivation of the community-based model*. Accordingly, the research process was co-created through a dialogical relationship between the local community and myself, which allowed us to observe the holistic potential of the biocultural-model and the opportunities to revive it, while also attending to the cultural dynamics that tie together institutional, social, organizational aspects and daily circumstances. Through the participatory collaborative process, people were able to reflect more deeply on local realities and how they were situated in the world. This understanding prepared us to work actively towards social change and value the participatory process as a way to re-empower the members of AJBD as cultural agents and pioneers of environmental work in their respective communities.

Thus, I discovered how 'popular education praxis' (theory and practice together), which encompasses a range of principles, methods and tools, would rightly fit with the project's epistemological, pedagogical, methodological and planning objectives.



## *ABC of Popular Education*

*Popular education, born as a literacy tool to Awake-Based-Communities inspired me to give myself permission to play with words to see possibilities (phrase's construction) of this pedagogy from A to Z that might bring frisky definitions by joining adjectives, nouns, verbs, adverb and prepositions. No grammatical rules are needed here please!!! Simply creativity and joy. Gracias!*

*A: Anti-Authoritarian Action-Analysis-Action*

*B: Brilliantly Built By Bountiful Brains*

*C: Coherent Critical Concientización Collaboratively Created*

*D: Dialectical Dialogue*

*E: Emancipatory Engaged Epistemology*

*F: Freedom Facilitator*

*G: Generous Grounded Guidance*

*H: Hopefully Holistic Hermeneutic*

*I: Ideally Intended Inspire Innovative Insights*

*J: Joyfully Juicy Justice*

*K: Knowledgably Negotiates Nurtured Knowledge*

*L: Letting Launch Liberatory Love-Learnings*

*M: Merges Marginalized Multitudes*

*N: Never-ending Novel*

*O: Ontologically Organized: Oppressor Out-Offline!*

*P: Participative Proposal Production*

*Q: Quite Questioning*

*R: Rethinking Rigid Routes*

*S: Solving Social Struggles*

*T: Transforming Tenets*

*U: Uppercase Understanding*

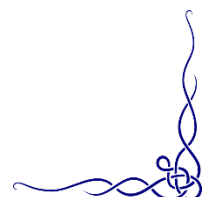
*V: Vigorated Vagility*

*W: Walking With Wisdom*

*X: Xerophily*

*Y: Yare Yearnings*

*Z: Zappy Zaftig*





## 2.1 Popular Education Framework

Popular education emerged as an emancipatory pedagogy from Latin American social movements that confronted social oppression, economic exploitation, political supremacy and cultural colonization<sup>18</sup>. It was developed and popularized by the work of individuals like Brazilian educator, Paulo Freire, who developed his theory from his work on literacy and social movements within marginalized communities, and offered frameworks for conceiving education as a tool for justice and liberation (Davis S, 2000 p.11). Freire emphasizes the concept of *Concientización*, or development of critical consciousness, as a dialectic process in which people can learn to identify, understand and evaluate the ideas, cultural and political contexts of oppression and their root causes in order to transform their realities. Imperative to this process is the notion of praxis, by which Freire means “reflection and action upon the world in order to change it” (Freire, 1990, p. 23). Praxis must be achieved by the people themselves, because liberation “cannot be handed down from above. It must come from the bottom up” (Thompson, 2010, p.3). The learning process in popular education is a dialogical and dialectic path that begins at identifying and describing the personal experience of each person as they become the protagonists of producing knowledge about their realities. This knowledge is constructed in the cycle of action-analysis-action, which represents many possibilities of creating meaning from the life experiences of those who engage with the process, making links between their own experience and historical and global processes.

## 2.2. Nuances in Popular Education

Popular education as a movement of theory and practice has developed a variety of methodological approaches that can be used in whatever way is suited for the purpose, i.e., individually or mixed, and in accordance with different objectives and cultural contexts<sup>19</sup>. For this project, I used a combination of methods such Participatory Research, the Ludic Dimension of Popular Education, Seize the Moment (STM), and Sistematización, which worked in concert with each other, instead of as separate elements, to inform my approach.

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<sup>18</sup> I learnt about social movements in Latin America during my undergraduate years, through the influential works of Colombian scholars such as Alfredo Molano (Life Stories), Orlando Fall Borda (Participatory Research Action), German Zabala Cubillos (The Cultural Manner and the Social Brain) and Luis Guillermo Vasco Uribe (Solidary Research). Most of these scholars worked as allies of the social movements between the '50s and the early '80s.

<sup>19</sup> Each of these processes has drawn from extensive literatures in multiple languages around the world. While deserving of more detailed description, I only provide brief descriptions here to contextualize the information to better understand the workshop processes and their outcomes.

## Participatory Research

Participatory research (PR; a term first articulated in Tanzania in the early 1970s), describes a variety of community-based approaches to creating knowledge, combining social investigation, education and action in an interrelated process (Budd, 2005, p. 2).<sup>20</sup> PR answers the call of popular education praxis, connecting knowledge, creation and action (Davis, 2000, p. 25). It focuses on “knowledge for action” and a “bottom-up approach” which “cuts across a broad collection of approaches intended to enable participants to develop their own understanding and embody the process being researched.”<sup>21</sup> PR encourages participation and self-development, and strengthens the capacity of local people to analyze their reality, express their problems and priorities, and use the information generated by their analysis to carry out the design, implementation, progress, monitoring and evaluation of their own projects.

## The Ludic Dimension of Popular Education

The ludic dimension of popular education<sup>22</sup> is a creative praxis that places enjoyment as a fundamental strategy of popular pedagogies for people to face their struggles. The ludic dimension of popular education is a radical vision of transgressive pedagogies that invite us to fully abandon, open and give ourselves in educational processes. From this perspective, playing is a critical and transformative act of knowing and being. In Spanish, this process is called ***jugar y jugarse***. In English the word for *jugar* literally translates as ‘play’ and *jugarse* as ‘playfulness,’ but its Spanish meaning is much deeper, and refers to the willingness to be transformed by risking oneself while being immersed in creativity. ‘Risk’ here means to look on to the emptiness of the unknown and be able to the jump into the adventure of creation. The *jugar y jugarse* approach claims that playfulness in popular education is not simply entertainment. It is a liberating radical action that denounces the use of manipulative techniques to cope more playfully with processes of oppression. Participatory ludic techniques in popular education are thus far from mere diversion. They are supported by a consistent and structured method with

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<sup>20</sup> “PR and its sister concept participatory action research (PAR) have in the past 15 years been taken up in many universities around the world, both as a teaching subject and as a research method for graduate studies.” <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ758761>

<sup>21</sup> Compendium of Participatory Research Methodologies, 2000.

<sup>22</sup> Developed by the Argentine group of popular educator, Pañuelos de Rebeldía. <https://loslibroslibres.wordpress.com/2010/08/07/jugar-y-jugarse-2da-edicion/>

the aim of making people protagonists of their own history<sup>23</sup> (Algave, 2006b, p.9).

## **Seize the Moment (STM)**

Seize the Moment<sup>24</sup> is a “rigorous, participatory, and creative means of researching, analyzing and planning that can be applied to organizational, community and social movement contexts. It draws on the widest possible array of popular education thinking and includes diverse creative practices to design and conduct the most appropriate and effective process for organizational and social change” (Catalyst Centre, 2012, para. 1)<sup>25</sup>. It is a method of democratic critical thinking and action used in community building and development for positive social change (Cavanagh, 2012a, p 7). In its praxis, it uses a systematic process to develop seven circular steps to look at all aspects of an issue from a holistic approach. “Popular Education Process follows a “spiral” logic...in which the process returns to a similar but different starting point before beginning a new cycle of analysis and change” (Catalyst Centre, 2012, para. 6). “When we ‘seize the moment’ we are guided by the pattern of a dynamic spiral of critical phases: Setting the stage; Naming ourselves; Naming the issues; Analyzing the issues; Planning for action; Taking action; and Evaluation/Monitoring/Follow up” (Catalyst Centre, 2012, para. 3). The seven components of STM are all vital but do not inevitably occur in an exacting order; they might at times occur simultaneously, be repeated more than once or be used in other unique ways<sup>26</sup> (Cavanagh, 2012b, p. 7). The efficiency of the STM method depends mainly on its ability to be adapted or oriented to different cultural contexts.

## **Sistematización**

The concept of *sistematización de experiencias* (systematization of experiences) was developed in Latin America as an effort to build context-based frameworks of theoretical interpretation from particular socio-political conditions (Jara, 2012, p.11). It is a process of social

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<sup>23</sup> This approach was also emphasized by the facilitator of the popular education class at York University, who reiterated however, that although it a structured radical pedagogy, it cannot be reduced simply to its technical aspects. What really is at play in Popular Education is its political dimension.

<sup>24</sup> I learnt that STM is the revised version of Naming the Moment: “STM has seven steps to a conjunctural analysis or political analysis for action” (FES Syllabus ENV5 3125 3.0, York University).  
[http://catalystcentre.ca/wpcontent/uploads/Naming\\_the\\_Moment\\_Manual.pdf](http://catalystcentre.ca/wpcontent/uploads/Naming_the_Moment_Manual.pdf)

<sup>25</sup> <http://www.catalystcentre.ca/consulting/seize-the-moment/>

<sup>26</sup> See Appendix 1: Seven steps of Seize the Moment. Spiral Model.

learning and knowledge built through the critical interpretation of experiences. It is produced by the active participation of those who are part of the experience through the instances of popular power, and through development and implementation of projects for communicating the results of the process (Centro de Estudios para la Educación Popular, Cepep, 2010, p.14). In other words, systematization is the construction of knowledge from practice to improve the practice itself, while enabling learning from experience to improve strategies for social change (Sistematización: Conceptos y Metodología. Curso-Taller, 1999a, p.13). The systematization of experiences from popular education signifies a meaningful instrument of questioning and searching for alternatives to "orthodox methods," i.e. generally positivist approaches that dominate the field of educational research and evaluation (Jara, 2012, p.14). These dynamics can be understood as the two faces of a coin—one descriptive and the other interpretative—that come into play. It allows for making a descriptive recovery of the process and then interpreting it critically and collectively (Sistematización: Conceptos (...), 1999b, p 15).

### 2.3 Project Design

*If I fell, it was because I was walking. And walking is worth it, even if you fall* –Eduardo Galeano

Most of what I have described until now has offered a contextual and methodological understanding relevant to my work with the AJBD in Colombia. I now present a description of how the project was born, designed and implemented.<sup>27</sup>

I trace the origin of this project to a request by the AJBD to support the resurgence of the community based-model “Osik Waramik Porek Tapshik”. I therefore found an excellent opportunity to link my research studies with the community’s needs. The process of preparing the proposal required constant communication with the community and adequate academic research to develop methodological strategies, which was strongly supported by my supervisor at FES. The sequence of steps is described below.

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<sup>27</sup> The project proposal was first drafted in the summer of 2016. It was designed, implemented and documented respectively during the winter of 2016-17, and the summer and fall of 2017. From the time of initial project design right up until my visit to Colombia, I was in constant communication with AJBD members via Skype, Whatsapp and email to discuss design, objectives, and expected outputs of the research proposal.

### **a. Pre-Planning Activities (Summer 2016)**

During the Summer 2016 term, I undertook an Individual Directed Study to deepen my understanding of Biocultural Diversity and to start collecting basic information about the AJBD to sketch the first draft of the research proposal. Via conference call, five board members and I talked about AJBD's plans and strategies to revive the community based-model. We carried out a preliminary analysis to outline an open-ended route map, which could incorporate changes as the project unfolded. Our delegated tasks at that stage included collating all the information gathered during the process of establishing the ethno-botanical garden. These pieces would be vital in putting together our plan. We compiled material related to our first project grant (proposal, reports, booklets, manual and audiovisuals). We then proposed a second meeting to report back on our delegated tasks. At the same time, I assisted the AJBD in administrative tasks related to its re-institutionalization as a grassroots non-profit organization and the revision of its statutes to satisfy government regulations.

### **b. Planning and Designing (Winter 2017)**

From December 2016 to April 2017, I focused on defining the framework of the methodological approach. This phase included popular education research and designing methods, and regular communication with the community in Colombia to discuss the methodology, goals and objectives as follows:

#### **Community Planning, Virtual Communication**

In the second week of December, we held a Skype meeting to communicate the chosen methodology for the project to the AJBD Board of Directors. They shared similar views on popular education's approach to social action to confront injustice and oppression, and so agreed to implement a participatory process. They also made a conceptual comparison between the project's proposed participatory methodologies with the *minga*<sup>28</sup> practice in the Andes, called *alík* in the native language. *Minga* is collaborative work in which the effort and contributions of every individual are deemed essential to carry out a communal task. *Minga* often refers to very hard tasks, but also to those that include enjoyment and creativity, without which the hard work would be difficult to handle. It is meant to celebrate community solidarity

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<sup>28</sup> A Quechua word for a system of collaborative work dating back to the Incas. Mingas usually include a feast to celebrate collaboration and hard work (Peliks. Liliانا M. 2012, In: *Pachamama Alliance*).

and lessons gained through the journey. During and after completing a task, people share food, traditional drinks and gather together, and so the *minga* is a unique, celebratory social space. People gather at *minga* for other types of occasions too, for example, when a family loses a loved one and requires emotional and logistical support in their time of grief. The success of *minga*, therefore, hinges on community solidarity.



The image on the left shows the main concepts that we discussed, and that I found relevant to include in the participatory approach of my project. It reflects the cultural interpretation step of the participatory process.

In the context of this project, the cultural insight of *minga* transcends the physical work and extends to the social

construction of knowledge. At the centre is the phrase '*Minga de Saberes*,' which might translate to 'collaborative work of knowledges.' We used the metaphor of building a house to describe the participatory work needed to rebuild the AJBD community-based model, which would only be possible through the community's engagement. This commitment requires '*Coherencia entre pensamiento, palabra y acción*' (See photo above), or 'Coherence between thoughts, words and action.' The coherence of these elements creates the '*Tejido Social*', or 'Social Fabric' grounded in cultural principles like solidarity and reciprocity that promote unity. El Tejido Social permits the interweaving of ideas and plans into actions, and that is the realization of 'Minga of Knowledge or thoughts,' the ability to build knowledge together for action. We also discussed how the participatory process should be an enjoyable journey, and so we related the Festive Spirit of *minga* to the ludic dimension of popular education. *Mingar* is a verb that describes the act of doing *minga*, and requires a playful disposition in its performance. In *minga* people also show their gratitude to the spiritual beings that support their work by bringing them *ofrendas*, or gifts giving. In response, the spirits bring good weather, abundant crops and balance to the territory. A *minga* therefore celebrates life, humans, animals, plants and spirits: a *minga* without a sense of festivity is not a *minga* at all.

The discussion with the community led us to think that the 'Minga de Saberes o Pensamientos' was both conceptually appropriate for the participatory approach of this project and culturally relevant to strengthen indigenous methodologies.

We then proceeded to set the main goal and objectives of the project according to the AJBD's revival needs. However, due to the intrinsic dynamics of the project's development (discussed in Chapter 4), our second objective could not be completely achieved.

**Project Goal:** *To collectively generate the organic, conceptual and methodological structure that will guide the reactivation of the community biocultural-based model.*

#### **Project Objectives**

1. To review the Community-Based Model's original design, "Osik Waramik Purek Tapshik," a "Living School of Nature and Culture" (*Escuela viva De la Naturaleza y la Cultura*) in order to explore and refine goals, objectives, methods of knowledge production, areas of work, programs and projects.
2. To examine as a case study the first project approved by *Ecofondo* in order to evaluate the epistemological orientation, learned experiences, goals, challenges, obstacles, failures, achievements, scope, as well the strategic plan for the second phase of the project.
3. To identify administrative, operational and logistical elements needed for the advancement of the institution in order to set up actions and relationships within the local, and national level (NGOs, grassroots communities, government agencies, policy makers, and funding organizations).

At the beginning of January 2017, we held another virtual meeting with 24 people, who were all as excited as I was, because it was the first time we "saw" each other. After the seemingly endless mutual greetings, the secretary suggested that we present a summary of our previous meeting, and informed the group of my travel plans to execute the project. I then described the projects objectives as 1) to support the organization's revival and 2) to accomplish my academic objectives to deepen my understanding of biocultural diversity conservation, through the implementation of popular education methods and strengthening of traditional methodologies. Some people from the group asked about the meaning of 'biocultural diversity' and 'popular education.' I responded by saying simply that "*Biocultural Diversity is the ecological and cultural wealth that you have in your territory. And popular education is an informal mode of education that challenges conventional pedagogical methods as the people involved in the process are the ones responsible for creating knowledge to change their realities*". The community agreed with

my explanation and suggested including indigenous traditional methods of knowing such as conversational circles and storytelling during the popular education workshops.

As I focused on designing the methods for the project, we kept our communication active through emails in which I informed them about how the project was progressing.

### **Designing methods for participatory workshops (February-March 2017)**

Through this phase of my research proposal, I had a back-and-forth dialogue about the meaning and utility of popular education methods with my supervisor, who provided me with thoughtful insights about the theory and possible 'model' for my chosen methods and strategies. According to the logic of my design, I wanted to develop the spiral model of STM. To deepen my understanding of this model, I searched through available theoretical material to unravel the political dimensions of the spiral approach and envision its application in my project. I quote my supervisor Chris' words here on honoring the praxis of popular education through the spiral model: "Based on the popular education model of collective learning through the process of action-reflection-action, the 'Spiral Model' represents the flow of this process...While the spiral model appears to follow a path from one step to the next, there is no definite order as the spiral moves through a continuum, from the bottom upward. In working through the STM process, a group may be drawn to return and re-examine a previous phase, while each time reflecting at a deeper level than before. Once an issue has been subjected to an STM process there is, ideally, a new starting point from which to begin again" (Cavanagh, 2012, p. 24). The coherent, critical and creative structure of this model helped me organize the structure of my project. I describe how this model worked for my specific project in Chapter 5.

Having gained conceptual clarity about the spiral model, I developed an organizational tool to plan the activities, and to visualize their social, political, cultural and environmental dimensions. For each activity I described the political purpose, objective and specific method to be used.<sup>29</sup> I learnt that an activity has to be planned by taking into account the synergies between the framework, methods, goals, objectives, and expected outcomes, and each of their roles within the research process.

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<sup>29</sup> See Appendix 2, Table 1: Design Looms of Po-Ed workshops. It includes detailed information in Spanish and connects together the objectives, activities, methods, participants and time-scales.



While designing the workshops, I learnt to weave the spiral model in the visual tables created by my supervisor, which he calls “popular education looms”. Although they are treated simply as tables for planning, I believe they are much more. These looms are powerful instruments to interweave concepts, plans, methods, times, spaces and even to envision possible action. Looms were the creative and magical tools that saved my facilitation process! 🖨️

### **c. Project implementation (Summer 2017 From April to July 2017)**

We conducted a series of three popular education workshops that included approximately 45-50 indigenous people, two peasants and 13-15 indigenous children. The participation of women and men with different occupations and professions (from farmers to university students) brought a diversity of knowledge and experiences that grounded the process in a richness of perspectives.<sup>30</sup>

The methods used were meant not to apply rigid techniques but facilitate the community’s critical thinking, creativity and capacity building. In analysing some of the social, cultural, political and environmental concerns, we engaged in a pedagogical place where we learned by doing while enjoying the pedagogic journey—grounded in the seven steps of Seize the Moment. STM served not only the purposes of the workshops but *seized* an opportunity that arose while developing the project, namely the approval of an unexpected government grant (discussed in Chapter 4). We therefore invested our energies in planning, designing and preparing logistics for the new project. The popular education process and government grant opportunity thus merged in the project’s execution.

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<sup>30</sup> Specific information of people’s backgrounds and occupations is provided in Chapter 3 and respective appendices.



## Chapter 3

### PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION: ACTIVITY REPORT

*[A]part from inquiry, apart from praxis, individuals cannot be truly human. Knowledge emerges only through invention and re-invention, through the restless, impatient, continuing, hopeful inquiry human beings pursue in the world, with the world, and with each other. -Paulo Freire-*

This chapter chronologically presents the activities held during the implementation of a series of three popular education workshops with AJBD's members. It outlines the development of the Spiral Model of popular education through these activities. Written as 'thick description,' it captures detailed information on biographical (who are the people involved in the process?), historical (what factors/issues led to the current situation?), situational (what are the cultural, political, economic and environmental contexts?), relational (what is happening?), interactional (what are the meanings and relationships?), and methodological (which kind of pedagogical methods were used to construct the project's participatory process?) aspects. In doing so, it gives an account of how popular education strategies helped people to critically revisit past experiences, evaluate their present situation and propose initiatives for the future. Given the way that each activity is described, the reader might 'see' the lives and understand the ways of thinking and producing knowledge of the community.

#### 3.1 Community Workshops

##### 3.1.1 Workshop: Day 1: THE PAST (April 12, 2017)

Through selected popular education activities, the first day's journey was designed to critically examine the experiences and lessons learned from the past. But importantly, its intention was to open up an ethical space where we would have the opportunity to encounter and engage with each other once again, share our learning expectations, set up guidelines for inclusive participation, and have an in-depth discussion on how the participatory research process could be linked to community needs. All the activities were guided under the explicit awareness that every single person, including myself, was there with a purpose. And that each of us had a unique voice, story, history, hopes, uncertainties, fears and desires. We were there not just as watchers, but as actors, creators and players in a universe of knowledge. Regardless of where we were going to end up, we were committed to undertaking the journey, because at the end of it all, it was our only certainty!

## The first re-encounter and hundreds of glances

*“On a sunny day, with the echo of the torrential river all around, above our heads and below our feet, surrounded by the majestic Andean hills, we were uncertain about what shapes, nuances and tones our investigative path would take. Today, April 12, 2017, we have started the research journey with just one thing in mind: Despite the circumstances that had separated us in the past, we were finally reunited. After more than 12 years of not seeing each other, we quickly became engrossed in deep conversations, of the kind that could jump from the most profound feelings and expressions of love that left one speechless, to the silliest of jokes and trivial chit-chat, which let us in on everybody’s life, work, family, dreams, etc. I was touched because people’s greetings were so genuine and warm, but at the same time I was so overwhelmed by the many questions they had about my new life in a new country, that I could not answer all of them. They were eager to know about my family, children, friends, studies, English skills and achievements. Likewise, a common question was about what Canada looks like in terms of its social organization, political structure, natural landscapes, food, cultures, education and job opportunities, and what it felt like to move from a country like Colombia to a place like Canada. They wondered if there still are native people in the North, and how they live and think. They certainly wanted to know everything, and I just told them that things are quite different from what people who do not live there usually think of the place. I told them that Canada is a settler colonial state that prides itself on its reputation as a multicultural country that defends human rights worldwide, but their own native people still are fighting their rights to live a worthy life. Although they were surprised by my comment, they did not stop looking at me like if I had come back with a kind of aureole above my head just because of my current life in the North! The way they treated me and observed me made me feel that they held on to the idea that living in a supposedly ‘developed’ country makes you an important person. I found it very embarrassing, but at the same time understandable. It made me think about the so-called ‘American Dream,’ held dear by thousands of Latin Americans who see the industrialized countries of North America as the ultra-mega-society where one can live a modern, bountiful life.... The children also looked at me like I was a weird being, who kissed and hugged them. Or maybe they saw me like a “wealthy aunty” who came in an airplane from a place very far away—a place that they didn’t know actually existed but were able to point out on a map. One of them, a little native boy with eager eyes and an incredible keenness, stuck on me like a tender tick from the first day that he saw me. I knew he was very curious about what I carried around in my luggage... I think he was a little discouraged when he realized it was just full of materials and supplies for the workshops. Other people would stare at me without uttering a single word, but with that special glint in their eyes that told me that they were overjoyed to see me again. Anyway.... we were so excited by the reunion that we almost forgot about the time and our plans to develop a schedule...” (Excerpt from my field journal. April 12, 2017. 11.32 p.m.*



## Day 1. Description of activities

### Opening the Stage: Gift Giving from the Heart

After greeting everybody, I learned that the community had planned something special to begin the first workshop. Since the recovery of spiritual practices was a priority for the native people, they wanted to inaugurate the participatory research process with a ritual. They argued that the 'process' should recognize ceremonies and rituals as vital to acknowledging indigenous ways of knowing. Thus, the first day commenced with a traditional outdoor harmonization (armonización) of music and dance around the fire. The ceremony of *limpia o refresco*<sup>31</sup> was performed to ask permission and give thanks to the spirits and ancestors of the territory.



Tata Lorenzo Muelas Tombé<sup>32</sup> then welcomed everybody as he talked about the purpose of being together with the following words:

*First of all, we want to thank the spirit of Mother Nature and all the people present today.... At a spiritual plane, in the coming and going of the Aro Iris<sup>33</sup> (rainbow) we, the Wampi<sup>34</sup> people, are*

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<sup>31</sup> *La limpia o refresco* is a gift giving traditional practice that still is alive among Andean cultures in South America, but is slowly disappearing. It could be considered equivalent to the smudge-cleansing ritual of North American Indigenous people. It is performed with fresh medicinal plants being offered to the spirits of nature and ancestors to keep balance in the territory, and performed at different events of community life such as at birth, death, weddings and for agricultural purposes.

<sup>32</sup> Lorenzo Muelas Tombé is the President of the AJBD and General Secretary of the Cabildo Indígena de Guambia. He has initiated a long-term process to rescuing spiritual values with the elders of his community. Tata and Taita are both titles given to men for a community leader and an elder respectively.

<sup>33</sup> In Spanish, the rainbow is called *Arco Iris* (arco=arch, and iris=the phenomenon that separates the spectrum of light from the sun). However, for the Misak People, the rainbow is called *Aro Iris*, where *Aro* means a circle. For them, it is wrong to call it an arch because they believe that the rainbow is a perfect circle, where other half continues underground. The *Aro Iris* is a living being in nature whose spirit comes and goes in a cyclical movement and teaches the Misak People about weather, time, birth and death.

<sup>34</sup> In the native Namrik language, *Wampi* is the name of the native community. Wam=People, Pi=Water. According to their original Law their first mothers and fathers came from the big lakes, and so they are the 'Children of the Water.' Wampi and Misak are synonymous: both are names for the people who come from the Pishimisak or *duende*, who is the Spirit of the Water. In this report, I use 'Wampi' and 'Misak' interchangeably to refer this community of indigenous people.

*returning again. By walking through this magical path that is our Jardín Botánico, we have walked along the spiral of coming and going.... This is a call to the Pishimisak and the Kallim, our guardian spirits:<sup>35</sup> across the planet humanity is passing through a period of crisis and great transition, and so in these modern times, our work is required. I believe that we—the ones who once wanted to be the seeds of life—are being called to return to our ways, to let our children continue to see the beauty of life in the existence of the Earth and humanity. Many of you were Taitas and Mamas (Elders), others were environmental protectors or part of the children’s theater group....It means that all of us, in one sense or another, were part of that beautiful dream: to have watched a tree grow, a native seed sprout, to have witnessed the courage of a bird to fly and the butterflies that continue giving color to nature ... Despite the fact that we went through hardships—we cried, we suffered, we went hungry—we kept walking, we managed to build that beautiful dream when we established the first intercultural Botanical Garden in Colombia. Each of us has left a fertile seed which is still alive....Today each one of us has a great strength and the experience and wisdom to continue work on this wonderful dream. I am glad we all are gathering here once again....I give thanks to the fire that is at the center of this circle, illuminating this new season. Later, we will hear some good news to start with more vigour this year. I think that it will give us the possibility to continue enlightening our hearts for the reconstruction of our life’s project...*

Once Tata Lorenzo concluded his address, I shared some sage and cedar that I had brought to the ceremony as ‘gifts from the heart,’ given to me by my indigenous friends in the North as an expression of solidarity with the indigenous People in Colombia. The community gave thanks for the gifts. “The prophesy of the Eagle and the Condor’s encounter is already happening,” one community member observed. We closed the ceremony with a smudging ritual. The Andean music and drumming continued as we got ready to move to a classroom for a more formal start to the session.



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<sup>35</sup> The Pishimisak and the Kallim are nature spirits that inhabit the most remote forests and lakes. Wampi People hold that the Pishimisak is the creator of their spiritual, cultural and social universe. This spirit is both male and female and is a keeper of the Water from where Misak cosmogony originates.

## Institutional welcoming

The formal inauguration included an address by the executive director of the AJBD, followed by my introduction as the facilitator.

Floresmiro Calambas<sup>36</sup> made a heart-warming welcome in the native language followed by a brief translation in Spanish:

*We are here today in our Nupirau<sup>37</sup>... When we look up to the sun, the moon, and the stars, we feel we are part of it... I mean they are us, so we have the right and the duty to take care of our big home, our Mother Earth, whom we call "Pirø Usri"<sup>38</sup> in our language. We, the great family of the Jardín Botánico Las Delicias, have the responsibility of environmental protection, which is the call of our great spirit, the Pishimisak,<sup>39</sup> and of our elders. That is why we are in this Minga of thoughts and knowledges to be able to flow, to be in harmony, in balance, in Pishinde. We thank the members, the board of directors and the elder Taita Javier Calambas who has been essential in our fight to defend our land. Special thanks to you Sandra, because you have travelled hundreds of miles to support us. You know that you are the pillar, a leader of our organization, so we are really thankful you are back. Welcome everybody to this journey of reactivation. Thank you so much.*

After the executive director's welcome, I was invited to speak. I began by saying that there were no words to describe the immense emotion that I was feeling, not only because of the reunion and the many possibilities we could weave together, but also due to the tremendous motivation I could sense among the members of the AJBD. I added that I was deeply touched and surprised by the opening ceremony around the fire because it showed me the community's strong commitment to rescue cultural values. I said that even though I was not a native person, I agreed wholeheartedly with the importance of placing their traditional knowledge at center stage, and strongly felt that in the roots of indigenous thought are significant teachings and wisdom to keep the balance in our planet. I mentioned the significance of our personal stories and voices during the participatory research process to collectively rebuild the community-based model. The following is a fragment from my speech:

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<sup>36</sup> Floresmiro Calambas is the Executive Director of the Asociación Jardín Botánico Las Delicias. He has many years of experience in community education and organization. Although the organization had been inactive for 12 years, he worked tirelessly to keep it alive.

<sup>37</sup> Nupirau is a compound word that means Big Territory: Nu=big, Pi=Water, Rau= Territory.

<sup>38</sup> The concept of Mother Earth also includes Water. Pi=Water, Rø=Land or Earth and Usri=Mother.

<sup>39</sup> In Andean cultures, the *duende* is the spirit of the water and guardian of the forest. Wampi people call the duende as Pishimisak. Pi=Water, Pishi=Freshness, Misak=People. According to the Misak people's original law, they are Children of the water.

*It is an honor for me to be here. Floresmiro mentioned that I was the pillar of the organization, and I am very grateful for this compliment, but the truth is that I do not want to be seen like that. Why? Because I think that a pillar is the most important thing that sustains any structure and if you perceive me like that, it would mean that if for some reason I could not be present, the organization might be not able to walk by itself ... I want to tell you that I do not have all the answers, but I am certain that I do not want to repeat the mistakes of the past where we were just few people leading the organization. And so this is why I do not want you to put your expectations on me to make this process work. I have come to weave and co-create with all of you the possibility of reactivating our organization.... In this sense, I encourage you to be aware of your own potential and experience. Each of you, at an individual level, has a history, a story, and a word, that is meaningful to our collective desire. I am sure that each of you has an idea, a thought or even a dream that may seem crazy or unrealizable, but if we think about it, it is the richest resource we have. All of these seeds are waiting to sprout. I would like to share a text that I read in my popular education class which really inspired me: "Through our stories we generate an energy that helps us to know who we are and where we are going ... We are all in some way made of words and stories... even if our stories are dramatic they are worthwhile..."<sup>40</sup> Our organization is a space to establish a dialogue, to listen, to believe in our words and to create with them. With this, I want to invite you to speak—with or without fear, it does not matter... Let's start this process with the most significant thing we have: our own voices.*

## **Setting the Stage for Democratic Communication**

My introduction set the stage up for democratic communication. As a facilitator, I invited people to have a dialogue about the kind of communication needed to guarantee that everybody involved would have the right to communicate and express their own ideas.



Conversational methods are an important part of the indigenous worldview that respects oral traditions to transmit knowledge—one that advocates the relational as essential to preserve a collectivist tradition and cultural values. Keeping this in mind, the first group activity was proposed as a conversation circle, where all participants had the opportunity to express their thoughts about what they understood to be democratic communication.

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<sup>40</sup> . In "Reimagination of the World: A critique of the New Age. Science and Popular Culture" by David Spangler. Santa FE: Bear & Co. (Spangler, 199)



As is custom, an elder opened the circle. Taita Javier Calambas Morales<sup>41</sup>, 86, noted that the point of view of elders (mamas and taitas) was essential to building participative communication, especially at a time when traditional knowledge was being forgotten and elders' voices were being silenced. One person mentioned that even though elders were the keepers of cultural values, their knowledge was unfortunately not being considered because the younger generation was more connected with technology and saw oral traditions as old fashioned. A young boy responded that he recognised his love for technology but that he was also aware of the importance of the elders' traditions. He argued that it was now impossible to go back to the old system of communication, so he thought that there should be a balance between the two forms, where the voices of their elders would be heard not just orally but even through new technological media such as audio-visuals. The group was divided on this suggestion. The dissenters claimed that the source of elders' wisdom could only be transmitted orally. Those who defended the young man argued that technology had become an important part of their current material culture as a mean of communication. At this moment the talking circle became noisy and the speakers alternated between Spanish and their native language. I noticed that they were very excited, and talked loudly without listening to each other. I mediated to remind them that we were trying to settle some thoughts about democratic communication and that disagreements could be expressed when they were addressed in a respectful way, which meant giving everybody the time and space to talk. I also mentioned that the discussion about tradition vs. technology was a valid point to keep in mind when we would later analyse the issues that were affecting cultural values. The participants apologized for the commotion but mentioned that they sometimes felt the need to carry on the discussion in their native language. A woman brought to the attention of the group that the vast majority of native people were afraid to speak in public. She was concerned about the lack of participation of native women. She said that although women attended workshops and meetings, most of the time they were afraid to speak out. She encouraged the women participants to share their opinions during the workshop sessions regardless of their doubts about whether their voices would be heard.

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<sup>41</sup> He is a native leader who led the fight for land recuperation from the Landowners (terratenientes) in the '70s. He supported the Indigenous movement in Colombia by participating in different social organizations such as Consejo Regional Indígena del Cauca (CRIC), Movimiento de Autoridades Indígenas de Colombia and the Asociación Nacional de Usuarios Campesinos (ANUC). He is also the main cofounder of the Asociación Jardín Botánico Las Delicias.

Another concern was about the participation of children: despite the fact that children were present at all community events, cultural traditions did not allow them to speak at these events. Some parents complained that children distracted them by playing and making noise. I talked about the importance of including children in the workshop, and the need to have dedicated activities for them. We agreed that children were also important and they must have a space to actively participate and be heard. Some observed that elders with hearing difficulties would find it difficult to follow the discussion, and so everybody should speak up. The general consensus was that everybody's opinion was important and that each person should be listened to and respected irrespective of differences in age, gender, race, education or cultural background. Towards the end, one participant said the even though the concept of democratic communication seemed to be new to them, they were already practicing it at home around the traditional fire, the first place of education. He added that he was sure that if they dug deep into their traditional practices, they would find that their ancestors had had a far superior communication system because they talked with spirits, animals and plants. He said that even today, some elders had that knowledge and so the research should think about how to make it effective.



The discussion at this session showed that the members of the AJBD had included personal, cultural and social elements to develop a method of democratic communication. It was clear that they understood external and internal concepts that should be considered to reach a mode of communication based on equity and social justice. It was agreed that the minutes of the discussion would be shared later with all members of the AJBD.



Having worked through the first step of the 'Seize the Moment' approach, we did a group exercise to continue sharing our words and raising the energy of group solidarity.

## The Chivas' Trip: Naming ourselves in relation to others

### Examples of chivas:

- Community leaders in any field
- People who participated in the recuperation of land during the '70s
- People who have lost a loved one
- People who have felt stressed or isolated
- People who feel a lack of confidence
- Singles / single parents
- Religious people
- Artists or artisans
- People who have suffered discrimination
- People who do not speak the native language
- People who depend on

The next activity was inspired by a popular video called 'All that we Share',<sup>42</sup> which demonstrates that when we label or pigeonhole people, we do not see them for who they truly are.

As the facilitator, I made the following call to share lived experiences, feelings or skills: Each person should board an imaginary *chiva*<sup>43</sup> (bus). Each of a total of 15 *chivas* represented a group of people who had specific predefined characteristics (see inset); one person could be part of more than one *chiva*. It allowed the community to begin expressing who they were and how they were connected to each other. They reflected that all of us had unique lived experiences that shaped our particular stories and histories. Some confessed that they felt vulnerable and even ashamed to join some *chivas*, especially the

ones they considered were only for those who had lived through a particular event. But the exercise also reminded us how we had more in common with each other than we often recognised, and how easily we judged somebody who seemed different, not realising that they might have had similar experiences to ours.

The lessons from the exercise helped pave the way to create a sense of solidarity. The participants enjoyed this activity and said they had never thought that something so simple and enjoyable would drive them to the profound realization that they shared common experiences. They also loved the more light-



<sup>42</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jD8tjhVO1Tc>

<sup>43</sup> A Chiva is an artisan bus used in rural Colombia and Ecuador, adapted to navigate the mountainous terrain of the region. They are varied and painted with bright colours and have local arabesques and figures. Source: Wikipedia: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chiva\\_bus](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chiva_bus).

hearted *chivas*, for example the one that asked for people who had peed their pants while laughing. Some reflected that culturally, the *chiva* is not just a mode of transport but also a place of social encounters and conversations.



Through this exercise people started building up the group energy, which proved useful for the next activity....

## **Naming Ourselves: Nombrándonos a Nosotros Mismos**

The activity 'Naming ourselves' was intended to identify group composition and to help express people's interests and expectations.

### **a. Group composition: How do I describe myself?**

The first part of a round table exercise consisted of creative individual introductions. Using an adjective that began with the initials of their name, each person had to present themselves, and what was of interest to them in the AJBD. This exercise quickly created an atmosphere of enjoyment and camaraderie in the group. They laughed at instances during their co-participant's introductions, when for example, they could not link the adjective with their initials.



This exercise allowed participants to share how they perceived the world, and how their perception had been moulded by their identities and individual histories. It showed that the composition of the group was mainly defined through a collective interest in the wellbeing of the community, of defending their indigenous territory, traditions, cultural values and ways of knowing and being.

The following testimonies serve as examples to show how an individual's worldview and capacities have been shaped by both their participation in the AJBD and their native identity.

Wilmar Muelas, a 26 year old economics student at the University de Valle, recounted an experience when he was 14, of a time when he participated in the children's ecological theater:

*When I was a child I played a character that portrays the predatory human being, consumerism, and the destruction of Mother Earth, which affects the life of plants, animals, water, soil, forests,*

*humans and everything that makes up nature. That is a beautiful memory I have because from that early age I realized that as indigenous people, we had something important to share with the world. That experience marked my life forever and helped me understand the importance of our traditional knowledge to take care of the Earth. I think this work was also very important at the local and national level because we were able to take that message to several universities and colleges, and through which we were able to sensitise people.*

In a similar vein, the experience of Albeiro Morales<sup>44</sup>, who served as President of the Association from the beginning until the time its activities were shut down, shows how the knowledge gained as the President of the AJBD helped him to develop leadership skills:

*At an individual level, the process of establishing the Botanical Garden taught me about leadership. I was the President from 1999 to 2004 and now I am the Manager of “La Cooperativa Multiactiva de San Fernando” and the Secretary of “Totowampa”, an artisans’ grassroots association. In the organizational activities, I learned about the power of capacity building. Once we were organized, even when we didn’t have the money, we made important changes... I also learned that if we want to be leaders or a role model for our community, we need to start healing past traumas and resentments that are currently affecting our familial bonds... Those are some of the teachings of “Osik Waramik Purek Tapshik”. I believe that those experiences are not only valuable but necessary to take up today to have a good life as indigenous Misak...*

After the individual presentations, we had a conversation about those who were not present that day and why and how their absence would affect the organization. We learned that three valued members had passed away<sup>45</sup>. Remembering them stirred up emotions within the group. With tears in her eyes, the mother of a boy who died in 2015 talked about how much she missed him, and how she was still recovering from the loss. An elder then invited us to observe a minute of silence to honor the deceased. I could not stop thinking about the boy, whom I had known all those many years ago. His natural charm and love of performance had set him apart, and I would tell him that one day he would become the best performer in the world. After a moment’s silence, the Executive Director observed that the composition of the AJBD had also changed since older members had left the association during the 12-year period of inactivity. I commented that their absence was unfortunate because they had brought invaluable experience with them. The representatives of the peasant community were not present on the first day, but joined us for the following sessions. The group also lamented the lack of interest

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<sup>44</sup> Albeiro Morales currently works in a directorial position in an Indigenous Cooperative and an artisans’ grassroots organization.

<sup>45</sup> Grandma Mama Nazaria Morales, 85, (wife of Taita Javier Calambás) was one of the cofounders of AJBD. Maria Antonia Cuchillo, 45 (wife of the Executive Director) and, Miguel Angel Calambas Pillimue, 20, who was part of the children’s theater group.

on the part of some members who had not turned up for the workshop. Edgar Muelas,<sup>46</sup> the current vice president and the coordinator of the Conservation Area reiterated the democratic nature of the AJBD and the choice of involvement that its members exercised:

*Those of us who are attending these workshops are showing respect for our organization and for each other. It means that because we care about our institutional mission and vision, we are here to think together about how to reactivate our community life-project. Nobody is obliged to come and nobody has been kicked out ....If you are here it is because you have heard the call to take care of our Mother Earth... because this is our first purpose, to reconcile with the main source of our existence as indigenous people and peasants ...We should be thankful for the experiences we have gained in the past because if we distil all that wisdom, we will have a huge opportunity to make great changes in the present, for us, for our land, and for the planet... Don't you feel happy when you see the youngsters who were part of the theater group committing themselves today to this cause? How did this happen? It is because we planted good seeds in fertile soil....Didn't we? Think about how much we can do as a group made up of cultural rescuers and environmental keepers. But as I said, nobody is obliged to come because your presence here has to come from the heart.*

## **b. Community Interests and Expectations**

In the second part of “Naming Ourselves” we worked on people’s interests and expectations<sup>47</sup>. Each group shared what outcomes they expected from the participatory process; what their hopes, wishes, and anticipations were. The general consensus indicated that the interests of most people were related to supporting the reactivation of the AJBD. Older members expressed the significance of taking up their life project once again because they were sure it would allow them to rebuild cultural values, protect the environment, and generate income to improve their quality of life. New members said they were interested in being part of learning how the community based-model worked and what they could do to support it.

### **Method:**

- 6 heterogeneous groups comprised of 7-8 people
- 45 minute discussion session
- 5 minutes to present results to the whole group

Groups 1, 3 and 4 highlighted that knowing about past experiences—both good and bad—carried important teachings and could be a point of departure for AJBD’s renewal.

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<sup>46</sup> Edgar Muelas was the coordinator of the greenhouse and nursery station of the AJBD. He is completing his undergraduate degree in Geography at Universidad del Valle.

<sup>47</sup> See Appendix 3, Table 1: Community Expectations.

*We expect to review the bad and the good experiences from the past because if we don't acknowledge what happened before it will be hard to understand our present and to plan something for the future. - Group 1*

*We want to learn about the lived experiences during the time of inactivity within the AJBD as well to validate past and new knowledge and ideas acquired in order to strengthen the process of reactivation... - Group 3*

*Recognizing and remembering the past is not only about revisiting good or bad memories but helps us to project our expectations into a broad vision for the future. - Group 4*

Another group mentioned the relevance of examining personal experiences and work in the present:

*At this point it is very important to remember and acknowledge our experiences—not only in the past but also our current personal experiences and work. - Group 4*

To realize the potential and capacity of each person, Groups 1 and 5 claimed that reactivation would only be possible if people relied on their capacities to lead the process:

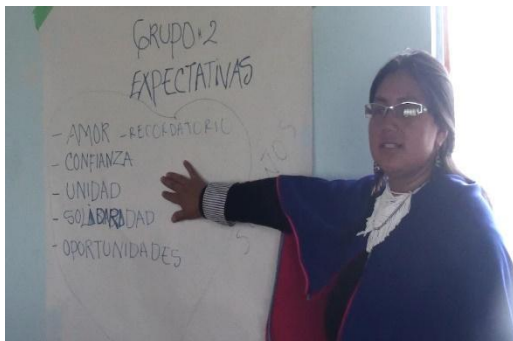
*[T]he reactivation process has to be done by including the ideas and thoughts of each member. To make it real, we have to believe in ourselves and in our ability to strengthen and lead the process of reviving the AJBD...Our group had raised those expectations so as not to depend on people from outside; as organization we already have the talent to succeed. - Group 1*

*[W]e need to harness our skills and abilities. A short while ago we undertook a participatory activity where we could see the potential of each one of us. Some have worked, some have studied, some belong to the council, and some are parents. Then, we began to visualize the capacities of each one of us to look for strategies to revive this Botanical Garden that is our home. Sandra told us at the beginning of the day that she had come to support our own initiative, and so she left us a grain, but now it is our task to recognize that as an organization we have both the human resources and the land to improve our lives. Keeping in mind all the expectations that have been mentioned today, we must rebuild the Botanic Garden Las Delicias. - Group 5*

While most of the groups expressed similar expectations such as revisiting lived experiences, skills, knowledges and capacities, Group 2 took a different perspective. They proposed that values such as confidence, trust, unity and solidarity would result from locating love as the core



of the research process. They argued that it was the main ingredient from which other expectations could be accomplished. Yoli Muelas<sup>48</sup> presented her group's view:



*We believe that our greatest strength is the force of love and the willpower of working together. If there is no love for someone or something, there is nothing. That's why we started with this expectation. If I express my love, I will have confidence towards the other. Then we can get together. It means that if there is love and trust, then unity immediately follows and solidarity starts to flourish when everybody begins to think about other people. Why we did reflect on those values as*

*expectations not only for the workshop but for the organization as a whole? Because if there is no love, there is no trust. And if there is no trust, there is no participation. Today there isn't the same trust and unity we had before. For example, most indigenous members in our community are working on their own expecting others to carry out the tasks... Many of us are not thinking about working in Minga, which represents unity and collaboration. We think that we must build solidarity. If we do not take these principles into account, we are not going to reach our dreams... we have to remember experiences of the past and also follow our elders' advice. - Group 2*

Group 4 enriched the understanding of unity as a prerequisite to acknowledge alterity:

*Unity is very important. We are already unified. As we are sharing right now and with the activities that we have done, it brings us trust and unity. The organization should be united not only in this space but in other places too....Our group also thought that we can reach unity when we recognise that we are all very different and no one is more important or better than the other. The differences help us grow. But sometimes we become blind to this knowledge and we say that these differences do not help us. I think we have to wake up and see that it make us grow. – Group 4.*



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<sup>48</sup> Yoli Janeth Muelas, 35, one of the strong women leaders of AJBD, has been very committed to its revival. She is an art teacher at an indigenous elementary school in El Colegio Agropecuario Indígena Guambiano. She was previously an environmental facilitator at the AJBD and supported the work of the children's ecological theatre. She currently serves on the directorial board of the AJBD.

They also reflected on the coherence between discourse and practice and giving prevalence to action:

*This expectation is about becoming aware that we are also part of the environment. We should not stay confined to the discourse that it's good to take care of nature, it is not like that. We have to, this is a must. At this moment, we are going to learn about the whole project, which is great, because our daily life is so normal and uneventful that maybe these workshops will help us expand our insight about the other opportunities we have... So, we hope to know more about our project and being coherent with the commitments we are making because practice is what gives shape to our words. – Group 4.*

Group 5 expressed a broad vision indicating different points that are best summarized in their final reflections:

*After creating unity among us, we have to take back what we had started. The seed is already there. Mother Nature guides us... We have grown enough and now we must begin to bear fruit and start working with the community.*

Overall, this activity allowed us to identify that the most relevant expectations for the participants were related to learning from past experiences and challenges; sharing present work and personal achievements; identifying human potential and skills; and recognizing the organization's leadership capacities. Further, as some groups pointed out, the prominence of love<sup>49</sup>, unity, trust, solidarity, respect for alterity and collaborative work are all inherent to cultural values and universal principles that should be located as central practices. Another important observation was the awareness and accountability of being part of nature, as well as ensuring consistency between theory and practice. This exercise was meaningful to the extent that people could think, reflect and express what they felt and expected not only for the research process, but for the organizational advancement of the AJBD. Adding to the community's thoughts, I made a few contributions by saying that some of my hopes were to think beyond pre-established schemes, to enjoy the adventure of learning and teaching, to awaken our imagination, to allow our creativity to guide the journey, to give color and wings to our dreams and realities, and to not be afraid or guilty for feeling vulnerable or uncertain about anything. My final expectation was to see us as explorers of knowledge, and so to be open to making

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<sup>49</sup> It made me think that community expectations go beyond academic criteria, which often lack a discussion of *love* as a value that could lead a scientific investigation. It also suggested the need to explore more deeply how the community tangibly perceives love as an essential part of community-based research processes.



suggestions included restricting cell phone use and the willingness to help with preparing food, organising logistics, cleaning and maintenance, etc.



Keeping in mind those principles “para una convivencia armonica”, we proceeded to examine both the report of the Board of Directors and my research proposal.

## Report of the Board of Directors and MES Research Proposal

During the first day of the workshop, the Executive Director presented the Board of Director’s statement:

*As the AJBD was paralyzed for more than 12 years, I took the initiative to do something to revive it. I’ve been leading this process as a legal representative because it was necessary for someone to do that. Since last year we have conducted some activities to legally re-incorporate our*

*organization in the Chamber of Commerce. This means that we have already paid all the government taxes that were owed during the years of inactivity. Due to the organization's difficulties related with its official status, in 2016, we raised funds for us to register again in the Chamber of Commerce. We have already obtained a Certificate of Good Standing. We currently have 59 registered members, although some of them are not present here. I am glad that there are young people here who are studying in different universities to pursue different careers. And I am also very happy with the arrival and support of Sandra Leon, because one of the management tasks of the Board of Directors has been precisely to contact her to find out ways of working together to revive our AJBD. Finally, I want to say that it has been a long and hard process but I am sure that we will continue this project of life. Thanks everybody for your participation and contributions at this stage of reactivation.*

I was then invited to present the purpose, objectives and methodology of my research proposal. I reminded them again that the AJBD community-based model would be reactivated only with the participation of all the members and that I would act not as community leader or academic researcher, but rather a facilitator of the process:

*Through my master's studies at York University, I have gained a deep understanding of the many layers that underlie colonial-authoritarian practices when working within local communities. So I am convinced that if you see me as a savior, it is going to reinforce forms of dependence instead of contributing towards moving us forward based on the principles of social justice. In other words, it would mean the reproduction of colonial power relationships within our organization. By recognizing my double identity within the AJBD, as someone who comes from academia to do a research project to support the reactivation process, and in my role and responsibilities as one of the cofounder-members, at this moment I feel that this new phase is more about co-creation... As many of you have so insightfully remarked, I also think that each one of the members here has a gift, something valuable to share and to offer that will help to rebuild our ABJD. In doing so, a sense of ownership of the organization will be developed in each one of you. Obviously, as a member of the Botanical Garden, I am here to support all your efforts. So I have come basically to listen to you, to know what you want, where you want to go, what your dreams and plans are. I do not come here to tell you where the Botanical Garden should go because I believe that everyone here can bring something to the table to share because everyone has a certain expertise, life experience or useful knowledge. For me, a key principle of this research process is that we are all equally responsible to learn from one another.*

I then talked about the specific methods we were going to use during the 3 day workshop, describing how they all stemmed from popular education tools, and were expected to enable community participation in order to build up knowledge together. The pedagogical aspects of those techniques would therefore have to be fashioned and implemented in a way that should not be misinterpreted as mere entertainment, although a playful component would be present most of the time.

### **Creating stories back and forth...**

The participants were then invited to find a partner to work with for five minutes in creating a story together by alternately contributing one word or phrase at a time. In this way they would build a logical short story, sentence by sentence. This activity helped them to awaken their imagination. Some of the participants observed that they had not thought it was possible to create a coherent story between two people in this manner, prompting the group to reflect working together can enhance our imagination.



### **Naming the issues of the Past: Nombrando los Problemas Del Pasado**

The 'Naming the issues' activity was carried out on the first and second day of the workshop. On the first day we reflected on the most critical moments of AJBD in the past. We went through the activity bearing in mind that both indigenous traditions and popular education approaches recognize the power of the word, narrative, storytelling and life stories as constructors of knowledge for social change. In two groups, the participants reflected on remembering past struggles. In the first group of 34, of which I was a part, individuals shared a story of the most significant memories they carried—personal, social or political. The second group of 15 went to another room to prepare a performance which would recreate a relevant issue from the past.

#### **Method:**

- Group Circle
- Throwing a ball at a partner while he/she was asked: Do you remember when...?
- 3 minutes sharing: the person receiving the ball talks about an issue from their past
- He/she throws the ball randomly to another person who has not yet spoken and so on.



## a. Memory of the Past through Story-Telling

The first group talked about some of the struggles they experienced in the past, especially while establishing the Botanical Garden in the midst of the armed conflict.

Taita Javier reminded us of how the AJBD acquired the land:

*One of our biggest struggles was to find a piece of land to set up our botanical garden. First, we tried to do it in our own family plots in the native reserve but because they were so small and not contiguous, it did not work. Then we tried desperately to negotiate with our native leaders to get a community lot, but they argued that there was not enough land within the reserve even for growing food. After many months of this struggle, we finally decided to purchase our own land in the municipality of Inza, which was quite far from our place but very suitable for our purposes. As each member contributed some money we could afford 74 hectares in the rainforest of Rio-Socio for an incredibly low price. The previous owner sold it to us at a very low cost because he was tired of trying and failing to grow food in the forest, because the forest was not meant for that. For our conservation plans, the forest worked very well. Even though we worked hard to relocate people, materials and food, and made personal sacrifices to be away from our families for long periods of time, visiting them just twice a month, it was like God's gift at that moment not only because we acquired the land, but because the peasant community from that area were very hospitable and they received us as if we were part of their own community.*

Julio C. Morales<sup>51</sup> commented on the first encounter with FARC guerrilla:

*I remember the first week, when we arrived at the rainforest to set up our botanical garden.... As we had no idea what was going on in that area, we were surprised when the guerrilla confronted us... They forced us to empty a truck that was transporting food to another municipality. They took the emptied truck, leaving food along the way... This had a strong impact on us, because we had heard on the news that the guerrilla was in that region, but we did not expect to see them so soon after we had arrived to start our environmental work...*



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<sup>51</sup> Julio Calambas was the coordinator of the ecological walking trails.

It was incredible to see how stories brought to the surface certain memories while recreating them with a flavour of resilience. This could be seen in Sandra Tunubala's<sup>52</sup> words, in which feelings of fear and joy were mixed.



*It was a hard time...I remember one day when the soup we were cooking got burnt. As there was no other food, we told people that it was 'roasted corn soup' and they believed us! I also remember that while we were drinking our 'roasted corn soup', we heard gun shots west of the greenhouse. We did not know what was going on but we were afraid and that's when we decided to stay in our dormitories until we could not hear the shots anymore ... All afternoon we were locked up. The next day we learned what had happened ... A confrontation between the Farc and the army had taken place right there, next to our place of work ... Later we made jokes about how the burned soup was easy to eat but it was the shots that gave us indigestion and even diarrhea (laughs)! What a memorable day...*

I could relate to Sandra's emotions, visualizing every detail that she creatively described. She inspired me to share my own memories about our work under those circumstances:

*Some of you might remember the day when the guerilla threatened my son with a gun to his head and warned us that they were not playing games: if they knew that we were giving information to the military forces or to the government, we were warned that something could happen to any of us... I was so shocked that I could hardly breathe...You can also imagine how devastating was it for my son Camilo who lived it with his own flesh....*

*It was really difficult for us because we were literally targeted by both groups...on one side we were worried about the threats we might receive from the insurgent group, and on the other by the national army....I also remember the day when the anti-guerrilla squad came and made all of us stand in a line on the street. I was indignant because the way they treated us was so humiliating. They intimidated us by asking us so many questions like if we were in contact with the Farc, if we knew where they were hiding, if we knew some names....We said that we had no idea about anything related to Farc. They also warned us that they would keep their eye on us and if they knew that we were hiding some information, they would come after us because it was illegal to protect subversive groups...They took our names and identification details and carefully inspected our dormitories.... later I found out that they had taken my money...*

Ivan Calambas<sup>53</sup>, 36, called on us to see the political side of that experience:

*Working in those circumstances taught us many things, including becoming more aware of the war in Colombia and the hardships that rural communities had to face as a result. Now we have*

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<sup>52</sup> Sandra Tunubala, 31, is a computer technician used to be an active member of the organization.

<sup>53</sup> Ivan Calambas was the coordinator of the Orchids area of the Botanical Garden when he was 24. He is now a member of the Cabildo, the highest authority of the Misak Community.



*to wait and see if the peace agreement between government and Farc is going to work...We will see...*

The stories represented an important moment to reflect not only on the socio-political issues in Colombia at that time but also on the power of storytelling to reconstruct events, and the personal and collective strength we gained while working in the crossfire. We found that bringing personal memories to re-enact the processes of the past was very useful while at the same time also very emotional. As we talked about specific events we also released memories of the pain and hardships we went through. The participants were amazed by the power of storytelling in recalling bad memories. They observed that although some of the stories seemed almost funny, when the events occurred they were not laughable at all. As a group, we concluded that that experience gave us the strength and wisdom to survive because it taught us to develop a deep sense of social cohesion and solidarity in challenging times.



#### **b. Dramatization: Naming our Discomfort Silently**

After the storytelling activity, Group 2 recreated a moment from the past through a silent performance they called “Naming our discomfort silently”. They reported that after discussing the performing style they were going to use, they decided to act without words for two reasons: First, because they wanted to create a sarcastic metaphor of the story they chose to narrate, and second, because this technique would help them hide their lack of theatrical skills.

They recreated a critical moment of the organization when it received a large grant (of \$100,000, a considerable amount in Colombian currency at that time) to establish the botanical garden. But because we were a very small organization, the sponsors directed us to find a local government organization that would serve us an umbrella agency to channel the funds. Although the local mayor's office signed the agreement to help us, they did not follow through. We faced many barriers on account of conflicting political interests. The umbrella organization, who was not involved in developing the project or writing the proposal, sent back the funds, citing a lack of adequate experience within the AJBD



The group's performance showed us that with that decision the government had silenced us and made us invisible. The group personified the characters involved in the conflict by using recognizable bodily and facial expressions, customs, symbols and written labels that let the oldest members in the audience immediately identify the exact situation they were referring to. The performance also helped the younger spectators learn about past events of which they were not aware. For all of us, the performers, the youth and the elders, the performance created a space to critically think about that particular experience and the many challenges that we faced as an organization. Some participants mentioned that they enjoyed the silent performance because it was an inspiring form of revisiting past events that were unfortunate and dramatic when they occurred, but with the passage of time could be seen from a critical, and even enjoyable, perspective. The performance concluded the first day of the workshop.







## Day 1 Reflection

Broadly speaking, I surmise that we met the objectives planned for the day. At the end, we shared our thoughts to evaluate the day's activities.

A keen observer noted that the final activities contrasted with each other because the first one focused on spoken stories and the second one on telling stories without words. The most common comments were that the participants enjoyed all the activities from which they had learnt enormously.

The community agreed that it was a great journey where people could start to have a voice about past issues, present interests and expectations for the future. For instance, naming some of the political issues that the organization faced in the past allowed them to critically understand and

analyse the elements that were at play when acquiring the land, finding local support to manage a grant and working in the middle of the armed conflict. Naming problems in the past was also relevant because it was the first time that they collectively and consciously created the time and space to think about those circumstances.

The exercise showed that storytelling methods give marginalized people the opportunity to analyse their social fights and struggles. It represents a powerful tool for community assessment, which corroborates the political dimension of popular education.

They were also appreciative of the methodology, like the use of conversation circles, which mirrored traditional practices, and so they felt confident to participate in such a familiar setting. Some of the activities based on popular education tools were new to them, but they enjoyed their participatory and lively dimensions.

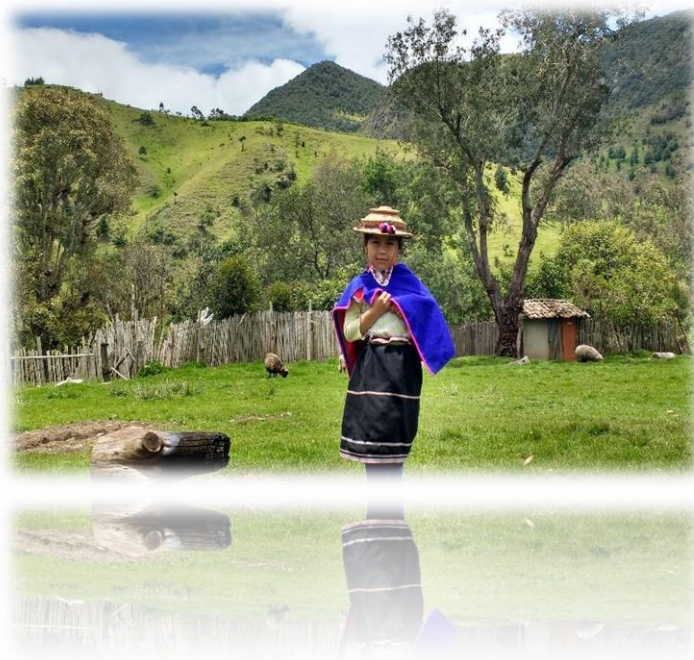


### 3.1.2 Day 2: THE PRESENT (April 13, 2017)

*Without a sense of identity, there can be no real struggle...*

-Paulo Freire-

The second day of the workshop focused on adding new information to existing knowledge. While revising the BCBM framework, we identified the negative and positive aspects of the organization, and outlined the most relevant issues facing the organisation in the present moment. The session intended to infuse new meaning into the BCBM using a threefold strategy: 1) Exploring the community-based model to revisit the AJBD's origins, conceptual approach, mission, vision and objectives, and refining and updating them according to the community's current needs; 2) Identifying positive and negative aspects of the AJBD to highlight important lessons learned; and 3) Naming the issues in the present to locate the political realities of AJBD members within their territorial jurisdiction (Indigenous Reserve and Peasant Land) and recognize the struggles in each territory. This strategy generated significant information from the past and present time that was practical and useful to outline an action plan for the future.



### Dark coffee on the river's edge...

*"It was very cold and windy, the clouds moved swiftly, the river flowed turbulently and my morning coffee was dark, darker than ever before. Just a whiff of its incomparable aroma got me high...highly connected with the wondrous pulse and vitality of Mother Nature.... Today, Tuesday April 13, with a cup of Colombian coffee in my hands, I was sitting at the edge of the water, enjoying the river's babbling while getting fresh air and re-energizing my mind and body before we began our second session. I arrived earlier than everybody else because I wanted to have some time to connect intimately with the land, without any human distraction or conversation. It felt so awe-inspiring to be in that state of stillness, where time and space became one inside the heart, as if new senses and new miracles were flourishing to reveal how the tiniest dewdrop holds an ocean of life and lives.... I was thinking, "Estar embebida de la Vida" (being drunk with life) is so simple, and but at the same time humans have made it so complicated...when suddenly, I noticed a native man, maybe in his 60s, right beside me. He offered me a small bunch of coca leaves, which is a common salutation among Andean people, and greeted me in his native language with a single native word, "Pishintøkən"<sup>54</sup>- which I knew meant "the day is fresh and cold." I replied, "Pishintøkən." He pointed in the distance and said in a calm voice, "Do you see that tree on the bank across the river? My mother told me that my great-grandfather planted it when he was married off at the age of 18....Can you imagine how old it is?" Before I could respond, he said, "What a nice day it is today... We are alive..." My jaw dropped, and I was speechless! He looked directly into my eyes and said, "Señora, enjoy the day." He put some coca-leaves<sup>55</sup> in his mouth and with a quick bow (venia) he took his leave, and walked on along the river's edge. I couldn't believe it...! It was as if he were a ghost. I thought maybe he wasn't real or that he was the duende who appeared in human form before me to confirm the existence of serendipity ...I was trying to decipher that mysterious encounter when I saw Floresmiro and two other men approaching me. Floresmiro looked worried...He mentioned that in spite of having discussed the importance of punctuality the day before, we were going to have to start late because very few people had arrived. We went into the room and decided to start on time with just the thirteen people who were there. Then, one by one, the rest came in to join us. I was not surprised at all, because 'yo conozco el ritmo de mi gente lationoamericana' (I know the rhythm of my Latin American folks)." (Except from my field journal, April 13, 12:49 p.m.)*

<sup>54</sup> In *Namrik*, the native language of Misak -Wampi people, there are different expressions of greeting. They tend to indicate weather conditions or natural cycles. Pishintøkən is a good example. Pi=water, Pishi=fresh or cold and Tøkən= so it is. "Pishintøkən" is therefore used as a greeting on cold days. Cold days are also related to the essence of the Pishimisak whose natural state of being is in Pishinde.

<sup>55</sup> "South Americans have cultivated coca plants for about 8.000 years. Valuing the leaves as highly as gold, the Inca treasured coca not only for its myriad medicinal properties but also for the integral part it played in their sacred rites and rituals" Source: <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/archaeology-and-history/magazine/2016/11-12/daily-life-coca-inca-andes-south-america/>

## Day 2: Description of Activities

### Checking Activity

The second popular education session began with a short activity where everybody shared their feelings, emotional state, and mood for the day.

To demonstrate how this activity would work, I initiated the round circle by recounting my mysterious encounter at the river. The person sitting next to me remarked that perhaps the man I met was his neighbour, who walks by that way every day. But, he warned me in a playful tone, the man could also be the Pishimisak or Duende, and that

I should be careful because he likes to play mischievous games. Perhaps, he added, if he had fallen in love with me—a metis, now ‘white’ woman in the North—he would return to take me to his home deep in the forest and I would disappear forever, having to forget all about my ‘good’ life in Canada! This comment about the kidnapper-duende prompted spontaneous laughter in the group. I responded by saying that if the duende was real, then the whole community was possibly *enduendada* (possessed by the duende). This was met with more laughter.

#### Method:

-In a circle, each person has 3 minutes to share how they feel, a thought, short story, poem, song, reflection or something that called their attention on the way to the workshop.

-Everyone is encouraged to participate, but those who do not wish to can choose to pass.



With a renewed and playful energy we continued the activity. Most participants said that they felt happy, enthusiastic, energized, eager to learn, curious, dynamic, and open to participate in the second session because they were expecting to have another wonderful day.

Elder Anselmo Muelas<sup>56</sup> made an important observation:

*I have always been thinking about what to do for our organization to stay alive. Looking at the excitement of the younger generation today, bringing new thoughts, I feel is a great sign to start our work again. That is why we should not think that our organization is paralyzed. No, we are the organization and it is just the beginning to restart our projects. We have to have the confidence that we are doing well for ourselves. With the knowledge of the elders, the strength and joy of the youth and the support of allies and new partners, we have to be sure that we are taking our organization forward.*

Floresmiro, who had earlier mentioned his worries about punctuality, said that while on the one hand he agreed with Taita Alsemo, on the other he wanted to express his anguish and frustration with non-punctuality. He reiterated the need to keep the agreed-upon commitments in mind:

*Yesterday, we drew up guidelines for harmonious co-existence. Most of the groups placed punctuality as a top priority, so I do not understand how were so enthusiastic in saying something that we are unable to follow. We really need to change that habit. If we do really want to make this organization work, we have to be serious about the commitments that we have made, otherwise we are not going to go anywhere...*

Oscar Calambas<sup>57</sup> concluded the first activity by recalling a quote he had found on Facebook: *Our music is the fruit to your struggles*. Because he was passionate about music, he said, he would like to conclude the activity playing a song on his flute. It was a beautiful tune that helped to ease the tension in the room that may have arisen from Floresmiro's comment.

The group was then invited to move around the classroom. They walked around and greeted each other. After a few minutes we sat down to plan our next activity.

### **Taking Stock of the Biocultural Community-Based Model (Adding Essential Information)**

In the second session we reviewed the origin of the community-based model “*Ōsik Waramik PurŌk Tapshik*”. This examination provided us with valuable information not only to revisit our philosophy, mission, vision and objectives, but also to understand the social, cultural, ecological and institutional context from which AJBD had emerged. We first explored the cultural

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<sup>56</sup> Anselmo Muelas, 57, is an indigenous sculptor and an avid bird lover. When the Botanical Garden was active 12 years ago, it hosted his wooden sculptures of Wampi mythological beings.

<sup>57</sup> Oscar Calambas, 24, is a student of the Universidad Misak, a university within the native community reserve. As a young boy he had played the Andean Condor at the Children's Ecological Theater.



perceptions that guided the community-based model and then discussed the social, cultural, and environmental context of the AJBD, in addition to the legal frameworks and rules that regulate botanical gardens in Colombia. The evaluation of the original community based-model revealed that it contained the key principles that could serve to construct our portfolio, project profiles and a networking platform. However, due to the complexity of the model itself, we agreed that the restructuring process was going to be long one that should be approached according to the organization's needs in the medium- and long- term.

Having laid out the context and position of the AJBD's Biocultural Community-Based Model, the next activity was directed to continue naming the issues and start crafting new meanings for the community-based model.

### Learning from both sides

This activity focused on identifying the advantages and challenges of AJBD's current situation. Drawing on people's experiences, we first discussed the importance of analysing every event from both sides. We posed questions to guide the exercise, for example: What does a positive/negative experience mean for you? What are the implications? What does this experience teach you? I have included some of the reflections of the participants below.

#### Method:

- 5 Work Tables (WT) according to age and gender:
- WT-1: Elders and environmental facilitators
- WT-2: Women
- WT-3: Youth
- WT-4: New Associates
- WT-5: Children
- 30 minutes discussion (Each person in each group gives their opinions)
- 5 minutes discussion of groups' results in the general plenary.



The Elders and Environmental Facilitators' Work Table<sup>58</sup> reflected on the good and bad experiences from the past and how they were linked to the present. Edgar Muelas summarized the group's discussion of the positive aspects:

*We think that the positive experiences of the AJBD include the knowledge, skills and capacities we have acquired. It has increased our awareness of the need to protect nature and recover traditional values to guarantee our cultural permanence. Another positive aspect is that we developed bonds of fraternity and unity through collaborative work.*

*The knowledge we gained helped us to re-orient our way of thinking to re-educate ourselves about how we use and manage our natural resources today. This is why we think that the reactivation of the AJBD by itself is a positive and necessary thing.*

Outlining the negative aspects, the group identified the armed conflict and the lack of financial resources as decisive factors that caused the organization's dissolution in the past. They also listed the barriers faced while finding land to establish the botanical garden. As Albeiro Morales recalled:

*At that time, we were exhausted trying to get a piece of land to establish the garden, so we spent a lot of energy that could have otherwise been used for the execution of the project itself... Once we got the land, we started work, but the armed conflict in the area impacted us badly, because we were scared all the time, barely managing to survive and trying to steer clear of the armed hostility. [Our group] also discussed how, once the funds were exhausted, the community lost interest. This proves that we still depend on government grants, and once that money is gone, we won't know what to do.... Now that we are aware of our skills to move forward with our organization, we should be more self-sufficient...The important lesson from bad experiences is not to repeat the same mistakes...*

The women explored a broader perspective of the negative and positive aspects, which reflected not only their position within the AJBD, but in their own communities as well. The Women's Work Table was comprised of 17 women between the ages of 15 to 60. They observed that even though many circumstances hold women back from participating in the organization's activities, they have the potential and capacity to contribute, beyond their role in the domestic sphere. Mariela Chantre<sup>59</sup> presented some reflections about the negative aspects:

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<sup>58</sup> Comprised of 15 men between the ages of 26 and 87.

<sup>59</sup> Mariela Chantre, 49, is a peasant leader from Tierra Dentro Inza-Cauca, a peasant area where the AJBD is located. She and her family became members of the AJBD as soon as the botanical garden was established, strengthening the intercultural participation within the organization.

*There is a lot of machismo [male chauvinism]...men usually say that women cannot participate in organizations because we know about nothing apart from pots, clothes and children. Sometimes we want to participate, but our husbands tell us not to. They say that we have to stay at home and cook while they go to the meetings. [Our group] discussed how some women do not like to participate because they think it is a waste of time, and show a lack of interest in training and organizational issues. There are other women who go to the meetings but are afraid to speak out. Although they have useful ideas, they are scared of being ridiculed, so they stay silent. Other women who are frustrated with their lives and are reluctant to share their feelings, prefer to remain isolated because they think that no one will support or understand them.*



Yoli Muelas argued that the issue of *machismo* contributes to invisibilising women:

*Disregarding women often begins with us, because sometimes we do not believe in our abilities or we don't fight for our right to have a voice and presence. I also think that invisibilising women is connected to machismo, or maybe it's a consequence because when we have a plan or when we give our opinions, our word is not taken into account...*

Benilda Tumiñá<sup>60</sup> added that sadly for Misak-Wampi People, a woman is only valued for her role in the home.

*In our culture, elders would always tell the women that their role was in the kitchen. They taught girls that they should only be in the kitchen at home and that when they grew up they should find a husband, take care of the children and continue cooking...*

*We think that regardless of whether a woman has studied or not, there are older women and young girls whose experiences can contribute a lot—not only to the organization, but also to the family and society. Since women are the pillars at home, we have developed organizational skills that can be applied in different instances. Our group discussed that women's innate leadership based in our experiences, ideas, knowledges, creativity, intuition and vision and even some level of education, are a positive and important asset to the organization. Today, young women refuse to do only housework because they know they also have the right to education and to organize. We have many values, but we have to learn to overcome our fears. We also thought that it was important to analyze the negative and positive aspects because both can help us improve the organization and ourselves.*

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<sup>60</sup> Benilda Tumiñá, 27, is a biology student at Universidad Del Cauca in Colombia. She previously served as the office manager and Secretary of the AJBD.

The activity provided us with material to continue “Naming the Issues” in the past and present. The Youth, New Members and Children’s groups also made significant contributions to the discussion.<sup>61</sup>

*Women*



*Elders and Men*



*Youth*

*New members*

<sup>61</sup> See Appendix 4, Table. 2: AJBD’s Positive and Negative Aspects, for an overview of the reflections of all the groups.

**Once we finished the Work Table deliberations, Yoli Muelas guided a warm up activity to re-energize the group and prepare them for the last activity of the day.**

## Who is forcing us?



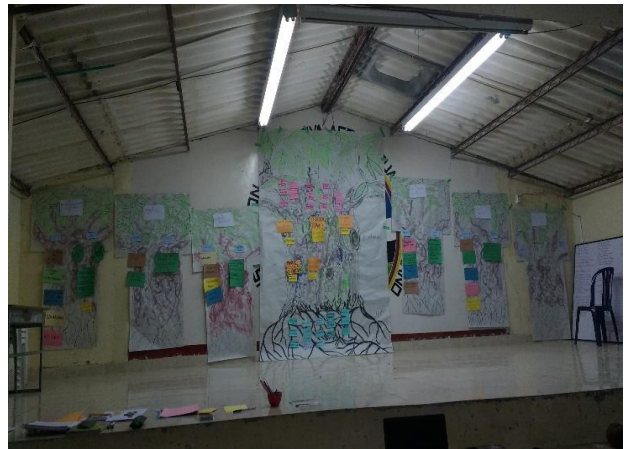
In this activity, the participants were divided into two groups and stood on either side of a line that divided the room. Each group had to try and bring as many people from the other side to theirs. They were allowed to do this by forcibly pulling them with their hands or clothes while their partners held on to them to prevent them from crossing the line. The physical interaction created a friendly and engaging atmosphere. The children and

young adults seemed to enjoy it the most as the older participants watched on as spectators. The intention of the activity was not only to re-energize the group but also make them think about the consequences of forcing a person onto their side.

## Naming the Issues in the Present and Assessing Influential Forces

### A Tree of Problems, a Forest of Solutions<sup>62</sup>:

In this activity, the participants reflected on the issues that the territory currently faced, and the ways of life of the indigenous and peasant communities of the AJBD members. They explored and exchanged their lived experiences and ideas about cultural, social, educational, ecological and agricultural issues while gaining an understanding of the political and economic forces at play against them, and thinking about possible strategies to develop, implement and evaluate solutions.



<sup>62</sup>.See Appendix. 5, Figure 1: A tree of problems a forest of possibilities

### Method:

- Brainstorming to get preliminary information.
- Prioritizing issues
- Synthetizing issues by categories
- Creating 6 groups: people freely join one of the following groups according to their personal interest on that particular topic:
  - Group 1. Cultural strengthening, focused on the Loss of Cosmovision and Cultural Values.
  - Group 2. Social Issues, focused on Intra-Family Violence.
  - Group 3. Educational System, focused on Foreign Education.
  - Group 4. Environmental Use of the Territory, focused on the Lack of Land.
  - Group 5. Food system, focused on the Economic Agricultural Model.
  - Group 6. Peasants' issues in Rio-Sucio focused on the Government's abandonment
- 45 minutes group discussions
- 5 minutes writing their findings
- 15 minutes to present their findings while placing the cards in the empty 'trees'.

The community participated in the creative process of designing one large tree and six smaller trees (one by each group) to visualise these problems and solutions. The trunk of the large tree represented the main problems, its roots the possible causes, and its branches the probable consequences. The roots of the six small trees served to locate possible solutions, their trunks represented knowledge and resources, and their branches represented potential strategies. The following two quotes provide an understanding of the most relevant reflections pointing to issues of cultural fragmentation from systematic processes of assimilation and the hegemonic colonization of power.

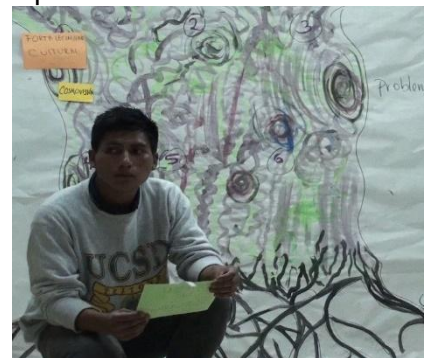
Regarding the factors that were destabilizing native family dynamics and socio-cultural structure, one group reflected:



*[T]he imposition of an external culture is strongly destroying our family unity. It has brought enormous issues and traumas reflected in intra- family violence, lack of self-esteem, alcoholism and even drug abuse; it has affected us generation after generation...[T]he loss of traditional knowledge is damaging our forms of social organization, and our familial and community relations. A consequence is our ethnic disintegration. This is why we urgently need to develop family programs with clear policies of mitigation to rescue our family values and unity because the home is the foundation of our community's wellbeing. - Group 2.*

Another group's reflection shared similar concerns related to the destruction of native cultures and cosmovision brought on by the current state-imposed model of development:

*Many of the challenges confronting the indigenous cosmovision and practices are related to unsustainable modern development, which goes against our traditional principles and knowledge, threatening our traditional sustainable ways of living. Our community is currently facing a major crisis due to the gradual loss of cultural values and knowledge associated with the conservation of the territory. This is reflected in the deterioration of our ecosystems and livelihoods on which our survival and wellbeing as indigenous people depend. These are realities that cannot be hidden. To solve these issues we*



*must go back to the knowledge of our elders and practice our own traditions and spirituality. It is sad that nowadays, for example, many of our own people are forgetting to perform the Refresco to the Pishimisak. Because of organised religion, they think that nature spirits are evil...They don't even want to hear about it anymore...It is really worrying that they prefer to go to church to read the Bible than to go to our sacred sites to offer an ofrenda o pagamento [gift giving] of gratitude to the spirits of nature for giving us water to drink and land to feed us... By the way, we also discussed how strange it is that most of the native people who are religious are also those who don't care that they are fumigating crops with agro toxins. - Group 1.*

The comments of this group made me think of a quote from Freire: “The oppressed, having internalized the image of the oppressor and adopted his guidelines, are fearful of freedom” (Freire, 1970, p. 47). I thought of the many forms that oppression takes. Evangelization among indigenous people in South America has had harmful impacts, invalidating the native belief systems that are fundamental pillars to cultural permanence. This might be an example of how the community introjects the tyrant, denying their roots and identity while affirming the status of the external oppressor. It is not the native individual who is to be blamed, but the colonial structure that has perpetrated oppression over thousands of years.

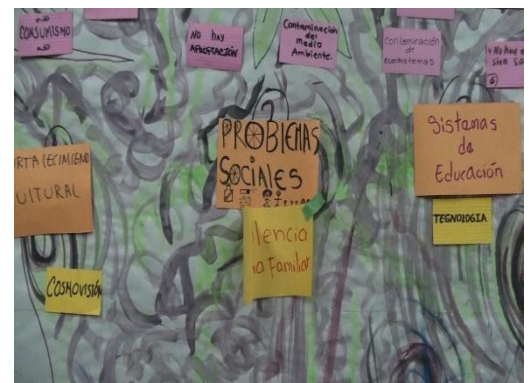


The discoveries from this activity showed that the first five groups concurred that the Wampi-native community of Silvia-Cauca has been negatively impacted through the imposition of mainstream hegemonic practices. The insistence of western developmental models and economic standards, production-oriented models, educational systems, cultural values, corporatized agriculture, environmental regulations and religious beliefs, has

created profound transformations within the territory, undermining existing complex social relationships and their interactions with the ecosystem.

Today, the community is aware that they have been seduced by the promise of modern progress, which, through advertising and politicking, has trapped them in a world of consumerism, individualism and competition. This has led to the weakening of cultural values and the capacity for self-determination stemming from ancestral knowledge.

The community thinks that they urgently need to take back their cultural values in order to rebuild their ethnic identity.





Group 6, which was comprised of two members of the peasant community of the Tierra- Dentro Cauca, argued that their main issues were linked to the lack of governmental support from government agencies in the context of health services, education and agriculture. They felt that one of the main reasons for this lack of support was the armed conflict that has historically characterized their land, and which has also caused

widespread displacement. However, the peasant community was positive and hopeful that with the signing of the peace agreement, the displacement was going to stop and the government would reinvest in the region to improve their quality of life. However, they observed, it would require work at the grassroots level to lead the organizational processes build capacity to fight for the community's rights. On this subject, Rene Otero<sup>63</sup>, one of the representatives of the peasant community said:

*During and after the armed confrontations we were left empty-handed. [The conflict] has left us farmers in such a deplorable condition that we don't even have the basic needs to survive, such as electricity and potable water. The war has denied us access to government support and has uprooted us from our land with no opportunities to live a [healthy and fulfilling] life. Nevertheless, we keep the faith and recognize that now is a good time to improve our lives because of the country's current political situation. In the Botanical Garden we see a great chance to build a strategic participatory plan for our region...*

The process of reparation of victims in Colombia is a priority in the agenda of the current government. However, in 2018 the presidential elections could negatively interfere in the development or continuity of the social programs aimed to compensate the victims of the war. Peasant families of the AJBD believe that the improvement of their region should not be only determined by government plans. They are convinced that the few inhabits of Rio-Socio can develop some strategies to improve their quality of life. Due to Tierra-Dentro Cauca's archeological and natural heritage, the revival of the AJBD could encourage local residents to return to the area, and also bring national and international tourism.

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<sup>63</sup> Rene Otero, 27, is from Rio-Socio, Municipio de Inza and is a student of Human Sciences and Education at Universidad Del Valle. He was previously a part of the Children's Ecological Theater.



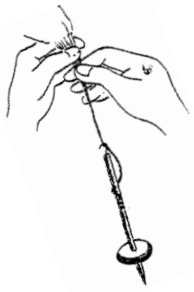
I was inspired by the insightful discussions from “**A Tree Problems, a Forest of Solutions**” to create a metaphor between the ‘trees’ of our workshop exercise and the social structure of the capitalist system:



*The Giant Tree could be compared with the dominant system that marginalizes people. Likewise, the small trees could be representative of us—the small organizations who are as yet full of possibilities and are changing the world in a variety of creative ways while confronting the giant problematic tree.*

*We think that the giant is stronger than us; it calls us the “small invisible minorities.” But if we look closely, we realize that we are neither invisible nor small, we are an enormous forest—represented by our allies and counterparts all over the world—that will flourish from its roots...*





## Day 2 Reflection

We concluded the day's activities with a brief group evaluation. Yoli Muelas clarified that the warm up exercise she directed was connected to the final activity because many of the issues faced by indigenous people had been generated by a dominant system that forces them to follow the modern development trajectory.

We noted that from our imagination, we are capable of turning a single tree of problems into a vast forest of possibilities. One participant pointed out that the exercise could be understood as critical tool to help navigate the departure from a culture that only focused on the 'problems' to re-create an entirely new culture of *solucionatic* (solutions), based on

participatory community processes that embodied an infinite universe of knowledges, experiences and imaginations. A culture where the impossible might become possible.

Although the group agreed that they had had an eventful and insightful day, it had been demanding, and so they preferred to retire for the evening and bring in written evaluations the following day.

Floresmiro reminded the gathering again that if they wanted to finish on time the following day, they would have to be punctual. With this, the second day of the workshop was brought to a close.



### 3.1.3 Day 3: THE FUTURE (April 14-2017)

*An unauthentic word, one which is unable to transform reality, results when dichotomy is imposed upon its constitutive elements. When a word is deprived of its dimension of action, reflection automatically suffers as well; and the word is changed into idle chatter, into verbalism, into an alienated and alienating "blah." It becomes an empty word, one which cannot denounce the world, for denunciation is impossible without a commitment to transform, and there is no transformation without action. -Paulo Freire-*

The purpose of the final session of the workshop was to start configuring a path towards praxis, i.e., linking theory and practice. The previous sessions had produced a wealth of information in terms of lessons from the past and current issues. The activities of the third day were therefore designed to motivate the community members to appreciate themselves as a source of information and knowledge about the world. The intention was that once they were encouraged to work with the knowledge from their own experiences, they could collectively develop strategies to realize an action plan that would change how they approached their immediate situation. Through two participatory and playfully dynamic exercises, we connected current human resources with the main areas of work of the AJBD, as well as future plans and community projects.

An elder started the session with a reflection about the cultural significance of home as the first place of traditional education, and the challenges and struggles of AJBD in the past. We concluded the popular education series with a final evaluation in which the community shared their impressions of the participatory methods used, emphasizing that theory without practice would not lead the organization to fulfil its goals. Although the participants made a commitment to continue working towards restarting the AJBD, they acknowledged that the political circumstances at the national level would ultimately play a part in influencing the outcome.

## Starlit

*"It is now almost 2 am and I cannot sleep. It is bizarre...in spite of the arduous journey we had today, I feel full of energy, as if I had rested the whole day. So, here I am. In a remote rural town, surrounded by the looming shadows of precipitous mountains, sitting down in the corner of a rustic wooden balcony, and thinking how fortunate I am to not have electricity so I can contemplate the vastness of the Milky Way! The night is quiet and serene, and the sky is lit up by stars. And I am wondering, what is out there...? Is the universe made of atoms, or of stories? What are we made of? Of stardust, a thought or of an infinite collection of tales? Is the essence of human dreams made up of stars ...? What are the dreams of other creatures? Who dreams all of us? Hmmm... Stars, stories and dreams, what a fabulous combination! This magnificence seems to be full of unnameable wonders... ah! Sighs of longing for a time when people still spoke the language of the stars, when we delicately observed ourselves in the eyes of the other, and took care of one another. A Time when there were no binary structures that separated us. When we could communicate with animals and plants because we knew we were different expressions of life but interconnected by the same thread that weaves multiply through the same loom of existence... I am longing for a time when we were mindful of the oneness of all. I am still awake, dreaming..... Being touched by stellar imagination, nostalgic feelings and endless stories of a place where we can live happily. Eduardo Galeano persistently crosses my thoughts with his compelling prose: "Most of humanity has only the right to see, to hear, and to be silent. What if we start by exercising the never proclaimed right to dream? What if we wander for a while to imagine another possible world..."<sup>64</sup> Galeano has come tonight to shine a light on my own deliriums, to whisper to me that it is possible to emerge from the margins and reclaim the right to fulfil our dreams. Dreams that have been laboriously designed in the fabric of our struggles. Struggles that have also been sung and danced by the Andean Duende and Lorca's Duende<sup>65</sup>. Are these duendes the same life force that gives people courage in their darkest hours? Or are they the essence from which our dreams emerge? My intuition tells me that they might be the same energy that arises from deep within the earth to inspire hope in people as they face their battles, and resist. In our final day of the popular education workshop, people's dreams blew over my utopic expectations. What a great gathering! What a life-injection! Beautiful people, genuine people,*

<sup>64</sup>In "El Derecho a Soñar," Eduardo Galeano brilliantly points out the possible reasons for society's disruption.

<https://textosparalaindignacion.wordpress.com/2011/06/10/el-derecho-de-sonar-eduardo-galeano/>. In "El Derecho a Soñar."

<sup>65</sup> The two duendes could also be seen as "a way to question hegemonic dichotomies – nature and culture, man and woman, human and non-human. It gives us a way to integrate fragments that have resulted from a western way of thinking, and decolonize the belief systems founded in them" (Excerpt from class presentation "Theory and Play of the Duende of Federico Garcia Lorca," November 15, 2015).

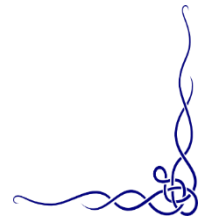
*connected to the Earth, with a dream for the future and an infinite capacity to resist social injustice and transform their reality....*

*Perhaps it is these musings that have caused my insomnia... Thinking about how to dream differently in a disconnected society that segregates everything: life-death, soul-soil, nature-humans, women-men, science-religion, technology-ecology, dreams-reality. These thoughts often make me stay up late into the night. Sometimes, it's hard to stop dreaming of the promises to connect things...*

*But now sleep is finally catching up with me... will it transport me to a dreamland?"*



WARNING: Please keep in mind that in these reflections, I am weaving together thoughts, feelings, stories, dreams, duendes and galaxies... They are bubbling in my soul yearning for the stars. I am only claiming my inherent right to be different; an enduendada-dreamer!



*(Except from my field journal. April 14, 3:25 a.m.)*

## Day 3. Description of activities

### Beginning in the kitchen

Before we started our work each day, we would assemble in the community kitchen for coffee and *masitas* (traditional bread). On the third morning, elder Taita Javier Calambas told us that it would be meaningful to open the session in an *alrededor de la candela en la cocina*, a talking circle around the kitchen fire. Although this was not planned, we all agreed. After drinking our morning coffee, Taita Javier Calambas shared his thoughts with us:



*We thank the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit for the gathering today....I wanted to open the session here, around our Nachak<sup>66</sup> because it is here that our culture builds the principles to lead a good life.... I am now almost 87 years old, and for as long as I can remember, I have known that everything starts at home because this is our first place of education. The first thing we do in the morning when we wake up is go to our kitchen and share how we feel around the fire. There, we share different thoughts, like what we dreamt of the previous night, trying to decipher the meaning of our dreams... It is where we give advice to our children, where we resolve our problems as a family, and talk about our desires and plans... It isn't? Every Misak-Wampi family has a Nachak. It is from here that we know who we are and where are we going.... One night in November of 2010, I had a dream that I want to share with you now. In the dream, I was told that there are four principles for us to live conscientiously: order, will, wisdom and commitment. Since then I have been thinking that it is up to us to think about how to strengthen the AJBD. In the past, this is how we did it: We first put our ideas down step by step, being clear about our objectives and outcomes. We used the power of our will to walk along the path. Sometimes we took firm steps and at other times, weak or wrong ones. At some point we needed to stop and evaluate the positive and negative experiences, but without fainting on the road. As we learned the lessons from both sides, we walked with more wisdom. Analysing what occurred along in the path was key because we could see clearly where we were situated, who was with us, who had fainted along the way and who wanted to obscure the light on our path. Our journey was built from sacrifices, fatigue, hunger, lack of shelter, clothing, and money - but with dignity....This has been our struggle as natives peoples and campesinos of the Botanical Garden...This is the story of our organization that I wanted to share with the younger generation today; to keep in your minds and hearts, to appreciate this path that emerged from the many difficulties we faced but battled to survive... Our long journey has not ended yet. So, if you consent, I will invite all those present to take a few minutes in front of this Nachak to think about how you can commit your own life, with your families, with your community and with our organization to our life-project....Words are not necessary now, just think about it.... This is a sacred commitment between you and our organization. We can share our thoughts later on.*

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<sup>66</sup> In native language "The Nachak" means any kind of fire. But the home fire is a very special Nachak because it is located in the kitchen which is the space per excellence for family socialization.

I felt both conflicted and inspired by the elder's spontaneous introduction. On the one hand, I had to confront my discomfort with his religious comment, but at the same time, it made me reflect on cultural syncretism within Andean cultures.

Apart from being recognized as a tireless defender of indigenous and peasant's rights and a key leader in the fight for the recuperation of land in Colombia in the 70s and 80s, Taita Javier is a devout catholic who claims the Christian God before the cultural cosmovision. He is a follower of Camilo Torres Restrepo, the Colombian revolutionary priest, and is an admirer of Mao TseTung. He is also convinced that indigenous education emanates from the roots up, around the fire in the kitchen. His reflection showed that for Wampi people, the territory itself is a pedagogic place. The kitchen fire becomes an ideal place not only to prepare food—which is also culturally important—but for the family to gather, share and nurture ideas and plans, and provide guidance. I was also inspired by how he used the metaphor of the path to accurately articulate AJBD's challenges and struggles. That story might serve as an example of the cyclical approach proposed by popular education, in which the interplay between theory and practice (evaluation-action-evaluation-action...) is situated at the core of the pedagogy to enable social change. Finally, beginning the day in the kitchen highlighted the relevance of popular education in creating alternative settings for transmitting knowledge. Popular education is committed to situating knowledge within cultural contexts, and validates traditional methods of knowing that confront authoritarian educative practices. So, the unexpected interjection by the elder also made me realize that planning from popular education cannot be rigid and must respond to community needs.



**With our hearts full of warm teachings, we then moved into the classroom to begin the activities planned for the day....**

## Dance of affinities: An Exploratory of talents, interests and offerings

### Method:

-Ask a question: What do you most enjoy in your daily job or labour?  
-Individually write the answer on a card  
-Hang the card in front of his/her chest  
-Music starts playing  
-People start dancing  
-People find other dancers who have similar answers  
-People form their own groups by empathies /commonalities  
-10 minutes to share in groups the reasons for their individual responses.  
-3 minutes for each group to present to the plenary the basis on which the group of affinity (GOA) was formed:  
GOA-1: Protectors of Spiritual Values and Cosmivision  
GOA-2: Readers and Writers  
GOA-3: Lovers of Cooking  
GOA-4: Explorers  
GOA-5: People who Share  
GOA-7: Artists  
GOA-8: Youth Leaders  
GOA-9: Community Workers  
-45 minutes of group table discussion  
-5 minutes of writing the answers on a paperboard divided into 4 columns: Group Name, Participants, Areas of Interest and Contributions  
-5 minutes for each group to present the results in the plenary

This session focused on identifying human potential, areas of interest, and goals or projects that would inform AJBD's reactivation. Groups of people with similarities—groups of affinities—focused on three elements: 1) Human potential within the AJBD (talents, occupations, skills and abilities); 2) Participants' interests, according to the seven areas or *estantillos*<sup>67</sup> of the Osik Waramik Porek Tapshik Model; and 3) Specific plans or projects from individuals that would enable the organization's growth.

From the group presentations we discerned a wide range of backgrounds and abilities within the AJBD,<sup>68</sup> from which we sketched a draft portfolio of members' occupations,

skills and interests. Irrespective of their abilities and qualifications<sup>69</sup>, however, the participants considered themselves to be learners. They expressed a keen interest in education, followed by ecological conservation, cultural recovery and community development. The exercise was useful in collating the various ways in which community members could contribute in the short- and medium-term.

<sup>67</sup> The "Osik Waramik Porek Tapshik" model has seven integrally connected areas or *estantillos*, a term used to describe the pillars that hold up the structure of a traditional house. For the AJBD, they are: 1) Estantillo de Fortalecimiento Cultural (Cultural Strength); 2) Estantillo de Educacion (Education); 3) Estantillo de Conservación (Conservation); 4) Estantillo de investigación (Research); 5) Estantillo de Desarrollo Comunitario (Community Development); 6) Estantillo de Comunicaciones (Communication); and 7) Estantillo de Administración (Administration).

<sup>68</sup> Among others, the participants included elders (*shures* and *shuras*), housekeepers, homemakers, labourers, farmers, traditional medicine practitioners, community educators, community leaders, artists, storytellers, biologists, linguists, agricultural engineers, geographers, economists, teachers, forest engineers, computer technicians, ecologists and musicians.

<sup>69</sup> See Appendix No. 6: AJBDS' Human talents and potentials; Tables 4,5,6,7. Figures: 2,3,4





**Dancers were able to identify other people who espoused similar talents, skills, or passions. After recognizing shared affinities we moved to the following exercise, which would bring back their passions but now related with their dreams ....**

## Hatching Our Dreams



This exercise inspired people to think about what their dreams were—for themselves and the AJBD<sup>70</sup>. We began with an informal conversation about our understanding of the word “dream”. One participant suggested that it was important to make a distinction between the dreams we have while we are sleeping with our desires or hopes. An elder responded by saying that the differentiation was not watertight because according to Misak tradition, the dreams we have at night guide our day-to-day life. He argued that culturally, dreams are considered the source from which Misak’ people articulate their heart’s desires because dreams communicate with us<sup>71</sup>. We agreed that for the purposes of the discussion, we would limit the meaning to people’s goals and aspirations, focusing on those that were feasible.

### Method:

- 15 minute conversation about dreams
- 3 minutes passing around a bag with colourful egg cases, each person takes one.
- 3 minutes to form 7 groups differentiated by the color of the egg cases.
- 2 minutes opening egg cases (in which is enclosed a surprise: a small chocolate egg and a strip of paper with an inspirational phrase);
- Silently read the phrase
- 1 minute to place the chocolate in the mouth without biting, but just savoring it, keeping eyes closed
- 10 minute guided visualization to start a journey of imaging personal dreams within the organization.
- 15 minute plenary discussion
- 50 minutes sharing of individual dreams (1 minute for each person)



<sup>70</sup> See Appendix 7, Table 8: Inventory of People’s Dreams.

<sup>71</sup> The Wampi-Misak weave their daily tasks and conversations with their dreams. They believe that the first thought was a dream that became a word, from where the language of the Wampi people emerged. Dreams are believed to originate in the spiritual realm: the spirits of water and forests are the makers of dreams in which they guide and teach the one who dreams. Dreams depict past, present and future events. Every morning, therefore, the first thing the Wampi people ask each other is: *What did your dream tell you?* (Excerpt from my Nature and Society Final Paper, December 15, 2017).

After the conversation, we symbolically 'hatched' our dreams. Each person was given a chocolate egg, which symbolised their dreams for the botanical garden. I explained that the egg represented a fragile container within which the chick grows, and so if we wanted something wonderful to be born, we should know how to nurture it.



A short, guided visualization exercise engaged the participants in articulating this idea:

*Now we are going to taste our individual and collective dreams. The dreams that each one of you carries, and those that we are going to build together. What is your soul's most intimate dream? A dream that you have always held on to but were unable to realize? [Instruction to eat the chocolate egg]. Please savour it. What is the unique flavour? Now dig into your dream, observe and imagine it. Give it the shape that you want; give it the colors and textures you like most.*



*What does it look like? Now we can even add music to it...Have you heard the call of your dreams? What does its music sound like? Our dreams are our heart's yearning. You are welcome to embody your most profound desires... each one of them is valid and can be realized, if we so wish. Embrace and delight in that dream with all your senses as if it were something very sweet that is about to be born in the world...Now you can slowly open your eyes....The floor is open to share your thoughts and experiences.*

A few participants volunteered to share their feelings and opinions<sup>72</sup>. One person commented that it was an enjoyable exercise, and something they had never experienced before.

Comparing the unborn chick to the potential of reviving the AJBD, as well the chocolate's flavor

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<sup>72</sup> Each person wrote down their dream on a card that matched the color of their egg. At the end of the exercise, each group shared their dreams with the rest of the groups. Children were part of a 'multicolor' group, and shared their dreams through a collective drawing exercise.

to the sweetness of the community's dreams, some felt, was an insightful metaphor. Some wondered about why they hadn't been able to realize their dreams and how they could be made into reality. I responded by saying that a dream isn't just a static vision, but requires taking action, and so the intention of the activity was to prompt thinking about where we are now and where we want to go....

Sharing their vision for the community, some participants claimed that in order to realise them, social structural changes within indigenous and peasant communities was necessary, along with strengthening cultural practices. They believed that their dreams could be realized only through the implementation of concrete strategies for the recovery of traditional pedagogies underlying the local food system, medicinal knowledge, environmental practices, education and artistic expressions.



### **Possible Challenges to Community Dreams**

The final part of this exercise focused on analysing the possibilities for the resurgence of the community based-model in the current political terrain. Although the community recognized the potential of the AJBD—inherent in the skills, talents and ambitions—they believed that its materialization depended to a large extent on how the post-peace agreement period would play out in Colombia, which is still in a fragile stage. There was a collective anxiety about what would come next. Despite the signing of the peace agreement, some said, the safety of the



community, its leaders, and the grassroots organizations that were fighting for human rights, had not been guaranteed. They also feared possible confrontations between paramilitary squads and dissident Farc groups, which often took place within indigenous and peasant territories.

The community then conducted a final written evaluation of the entire workshop series. The evaluation drew from what they learned about themselves, their peers, the organization, methodology and /or territory, connections made, what they liked or disliked and why, and suggestions for improvement. The general consensus was that



the workshops were inspirational because of their participatory approach. The significance of popular education methods to empower adults, youth and children enabled everyone to have a real presence and voice throughout the workshop series. The process helped them connect the community and organisation's past, present and future, and articulate their issues and visualize strategies for community action. An excerpt from one of the evaluations highlights the importance of popular education methodology to enable the community—as individuals and as a collective—to produce knowledge in a playful way, while generating awareness for social change:

*As an elementary school teacher, I know that the best way to teach children is through play, but I never imagined that those methods could be applied to adults as well. What I really loved in the popular education workshops that Sandra facilitated was the sense of playfulness. I realized the importance of popular education in how it gives courage to each person to express their thoughts in a playful manner. From these workshops we have learned a lot because we enjoyed what we were doing. We were the protagonists of action and of producing ideas. It was very different from other training workshops that I have taken part in, where the trainer –who is often very rigid and boring- is in charge of everything, and the community is no more than a painting on the wall, simply a spectator... In our workshops it became clear that the person who directs the workshops is not the highest authority and the one who does everything; we can learn from each other. This means that in some way we are both learners and teachers. Thanks to these methods we had participation of all women, men, children and youth. I also observed the importance of time management, and to listen to everybody. At the end of each activity I liked the evaluation and conclusions that we shared in a talking circle. From popular education methodology we learn by doing in a fun and interesting way. It gave us hope that we already have the capacities, skills and knowledge not only to revive our Osik Waramik Pure Tapshik model but to work towards solving the issues we face within our territories. - Yoli Muelas*

**To conclude the day and the workshop series, we shared our experiences in a 'circle of thoughts,' and created a 'collective collage of words'. The first person would begin with two words, the next person would add two more, and so on until we had gone around the circle....**

# Sharing = Gratitude

Life-Stories, Indigenous-Education, Lived-Experiences,  
Knowledge-Creators, Elders-Wisdom, Territory-Keepers,  
Words-Actions, Theory-Practice, Action-Words,  
Popular-Education, Empowering-Pedagogy,  
Questions-Answers, Unlearning-Learning, Answers-Questions,  
Teach-to-learn, Participatory-Workshops, Learn-to-Teach,  
Joyful-Learning, Collective-Learning, Self-Learning,  
Rural-People, Native-Seeds, Local-Knowledge,  
Clean-Water, People-Struggles, Soberania-Alimentaria,  
Oppressive-Systems, Grassroots-Resistance  
Rethink-History, People-Involvement, Collective-Memory,  
Traditional-Values, Pishinde-Pishimisak, Spiritual-World,  
Environment-Defense, Innate-Rights, Cultural-Permanence,  
Mother-Earth, Forest-Solutions, Sacred-Land, Sun-Shine,  
Desired-Dreams, Mundo-Soñado, Good-Life, Buen-Vivir  
Hugging-You, Awesome-Children, Having-Fun  
Love-Teaching, Teachers-Appendices,  
Our-Journey, Critical-Thinking, Inspirational-Work,  
Music-Dance, Here-Now, Fiesta-Chicha,  
Mur-Mur, Life-Project, Namuy-Misak,  
Four-elements, Biocultural-Diversity, Life-Makers,  
Incredible-Experience,  
Share-Peacefully, Pishinde-Time, Reciprocal-Solidarity  
Mayele-Acompañamiento, Linchap-Reciprocidad, Lata-Lata-Equidad  
Pay-Pay, Unkua-Unkua





### Day 3 Reflection

The third day was highly gratifying because it brought to the forefront the immense human potential within the AJBD. The recognition of each person's experiences, knowledge, skills and dreams will be the main source of strength for the community-based model. However, the socio-political situation in Colombia at this moment hinges on the post-agreement phase, which is still in its early stages. How these circumstances play out could very well affect the community's plans.

In the final evaluation, the community found that the playful dimension of popular education made the journey dynamic, participatory and thoroughly enjoyable. Through these methods, they identified their issues and constructed the knowledge needed to start taking action. They easily grasped the theory-and-practice concept as it reflected their own cultural practices. Understanding the connection between the past, present and future led them to think about how lived experiences were

essential in community processes of self-reconstruction.

The evaluation also revealed that the workshops broadened the scope of their concerns to include an understanding of the political, social, cultural and environmental issues that are at play among local communities, especially in southwestern Colombia, and in many other parts of the world too.

As the elder mentioned, the conclusion of the workshop has not ended the process. Rather, it is just the beginning of a path to rebuilding the AJBD and their dreams. The workshops provided the inputs to name the hopes, goals and dreams for the organization, and outline the initiatives and projects for an action plan to reactivate the community-based model. These are the seeds that will one day yield fruit for present and future generations.







## Chapter 4

### APROPOS OF SEIZING/NAMING THE MOMENT/SISTEMATIZACION: A HAPPY COINCIDENCE

*“To affirm that men and women are persons and as persons should be free, and yet to do nothing tangible to make this affirmation a reality, is a farce.” “....there is no transformation without action.” -Paulo Freire-*

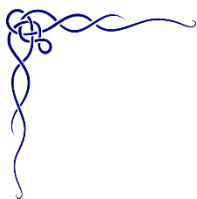
My original project proposal envisioned the participatory process to be applied through two stages: 1) the implementation of a three-part popular education workshop series that would help review the AJBD’s past, present and future challenges and opportunities; and 2) the coming together of a team to work on sistematización (See Chapter 2). However, things did not turn out exactly according to plan, because in an extraordinary turn of chance, a government fund<sup>73</sup> was approved at the same time that I was in Colombia carrying out my project. I was thus in a quandary: Should I go ahead with my original project, or seize the opportunity, which otherwise would be lost, and include the government funded project by aligning it as closely as possible with the original objectives and participatory process of my own proposal? Although I conducted the workshops as planned, the second part of the proposal, which involved the collective Sistematizacion to analyse the process and workshops results, unfolded differently. This was in part due to the accidental, but extremely fortunate, coincidence. The funding opportunity led us to focus all our energy in the planning of the approved project and to adjust the popular education strategy in order to fit it into developing the new proposal.

This chapter details that "happy accident"<sup>74</sup>. Given my connection with the community—forged over many years and renewed through the new popular education approach—my committed involvement in the new project found fertile soil to plant the seeds of the participatory research process. In a sense it can be considered as activist work, or engaged scholarship. However, in terms of my methodology, it is simply the praxis of popular education. The happy accident aptly signifies the “conjuncture” that in popular education is called ‘Naming / Seizing the Moment’. Here I present how we seized the moment when we learned of the funding opportunity. I discuss how 1) the participatory research process / content of the workshops fed into the new context of the government approved grant and 2) the funders' requirements fit with community needs.

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<sup>73</sup> This Fund aims to recover traditional knowledge in order to use and appropriate the territory according to the indigenous law of origin.

<sup>74</sup> I thank my supervisor Chris Cavanagh for suggesting the title ‘happy accident’ and for helping me think through the interconnections between my research proposal and the government-funded project proposal.



## Serendipity



*I have come to think that sometimes the universe delights in immersing me in strange games.... Is it true that when the universe conspires in our favour, invisible threads spin on the infinite loom of happy accidents...?*

*I think that "good luck or coincidences" happen when your hopes are bigger than your fears...Last night I watched a stimulating video of Paulo Freire which led me to an in-depth exploration of what prompts my actions in this world... "There is no change without dreams as there is no dream without hope...That hope that is embodied as something practical. That hope must involve the hopeful in concrete action. True hope implies my movement to remake the world with my praxis alongside others' praxis....Hope alone does not transform the world but without hope we cannot transform it." Freire's inspired thinking made me wonder about the dialectic between hope and life... My hopeful engagement with people in South America taught me that life is also an unpredictable scenario full of opportunities when we have the eyes not only to see them but to design, seize, name, shape, dance and even fall in love with and through them...*

*It was worth jugar y jugarse with and for the other to exchange our "gifts". And in that giving, to enrich our existence, to flee from monotony, to live daringly and dangerously. And from the margins, polish our thoughts and design new prisms from which to observe and shift our realities...*

*I am often hopeful that it is possible to give wings to peoples' dreams, desires and expectations, if you give yourself permission to express your full potentials ...The acknowledgement of who you really are might inspire others to take action and change what is not aligned with living a good life. Our duty is to reinvent the world...*

*Que la esperanza en un mundo justo, bondadoso y amoroso nos permita seguir tejiendo palmo a palmo nuevos anhelos y proyectos para que la vida reverdezca en cada horizonte donde habita un futuro promisorio en el presente....*



## **4.1 Taking Action /In search of opportunities**

During my stay in Colombia, I spent part of my time assisting the AJBD in securing government funding and other administrative matters. I drafted two grant proposals<sup>75</sup> and contacted institutions that could be potential collaborators. This work was essential because it gave us the hope and strength needed at the right time: the approval of both proposals and networking allowed us to open gateways to financial, academic and technical support to reinforce our institutional mission and thus tangibly revive the community-based model.

### **Seeking government funds**

#### **a. Proposal preparation**

In early 2017, I learned that the United Nations in Colombia had put out an open call for grant proposals aimed to support local communities that had suffered from social exclusion and had been affected by the conflict. Their objective was to strengthen community environmental management by financing projects that contributed to the conservation of biodiversity, reinforcement of local capacities and improvement of local livelihoods. This framework aligned perfectly with both the community's needs and my own capabilities, based on my educational background. And so I asked the AJBD about applying for the grant. They responded enthusiastically, and felt that in practical terms, getting financial support was key to reviving the organization. Although it was not a planned part of my research, and in spite of the additional time and effort I would have to invest, we embarked on preparing the grant proposal. I was in constant dialogue with five members of the board of directors,<sup>76</sup> discussing what would be the best way to structure our proposal. At the beginning of April (two weeks before the popular education workshop series), we were told that UN grant was approved, but because we did not want it to interfere with the workshop, we decided to wait to tell the community the good news on the last day of the workshop. Our news was met with considerable excitement, but we decided to discuss the details at a later date.

In June, we applied for and received a second grant from the Colombian Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Tourism. The project proposed the creation of a Community Tourism Program, for community-based tourism based on a bird-watching program at our Living School of Nature.

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<sup>75</sup> The first grant (\$30.000 USD), sponsored by the United Nations in Colombia supports local communities' efforts in environmental protection. This project began implementation in mid-August, 2017. The second fund (\$ 50.000.000 COP approx. \$16.500 USD), approved by the Colombian Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Tourism, supports tourism-related projects of ethnic groups and peasant families. It will begin at the end of 2018.

<sup>76</sup> Yoli Janeth Muelas, Floresmiro Calambás, Edgar Muelas, Néstor Muelas and Lorenzo Muelas Tombé.

Since the community did not have the skills to write project proposals according to the western parameters that are typical of such agencies, they did not participate directly in its preparation. Thus, I took the responsibility of preparing the proposals in keeping with funding agency requirements. However, I must reiterate that the process was a collective one in which the community's role was essential in providing the information needed to structure both grants.

#### **b. Community Assembly to Discuss the United Nations Grant April 19-2016**

A few days after our popular education workshop series we held an impromptu assembly to share and discuss the good news with all of AJBD's members. Tata Lorenzo M. Tombé opened the meeting with some encouraging words:

*As you already know, we have received financial support from the United Nations. Through this specific project we will start not only to give shape to our dreams of reviving our organization but to project our work beyond the AJBD .... This is the first time that as an organization we will be working within our native reserve, so this is a great occasion to bring all the knowledge acquired from the past and all the reflections and methods we recently undertook in the pop-ed sessions and put them into action. This project is a concrete opportunity that will allow our Misak Community to rescue our cultural values in order to resignify the way we use and manage our land. I think this is the right time...the organization has the organizational and administrative maturity to help our community build their awareness of our spiritual beliefs and their importance in the protecting the environment....Our spiritual knowledge is the key to our revival, it will bring our people back to their roots. This is what we are going to do through the TIICA-Misak project.*

Yoli Muelas and Edgar Muelas then made a presentation detailing the funding framework and the project's conceptual design, direction, objectives and activities.<sup>77</sup>

After this presentation, Floresmiro Calambas translated key aspects of the presentation in the native language; he had wanted to make sure that everyone clearly understood the details of the project.

As they learnt during the previous popular education workshops, there was a range of issues within the native reserve that needed to be urgently addressed, so they felt that the execution of the project presented an opportunity for the AJBD to take a lead role in solving those problems. They also discussed the process of getting permission from the native authorities and finding allies within the community to include in the participatory process. Together we then outlined

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<sup>77</sup> See Appendix 8: TIICA-Misak Project (brief summary in English) and Spanish).

possible community strategies to begin the process. We decided that we needed to first review the information provided by the previous participatory research process of the workshops and use it as a baseline to develop an action plan. I also explained the importance of sistematizacion to critically analyse our findings, and so the next step would be to form a team to work towards that purpose. We also agreed to develop more popular education workshops to discuss our analyses and link them with the development of the project.

The assembly came to a close with Nestor Muelas' reading of the introduction to the Project's Cultural Vision, translated from the Spanish here:

*Since time immemorial we have lived here in our Nupirae. We are the Children of the Water's Roots... The Pishimisak, spirit of our territory, has shown us the way to take care of this land, their home, your home, our home. Pishimisak's footprints lead us along paths of crystal clear waters and mountains where the 'secret' of life is hidden. Places where dreams of another time appear and life refuses to perish.... There live the spirits of earth and rain... Caring for, harmonizing and balancing with, and making an offering to the páramos, lagoons, mountains and forests is our destiny. The elders remind us of our law of origin so when we go to our sacred sites we must have a clean mind and a heart willing to perform Refresco and to bring Ofrendas. Our grandparents teach us how to connect, how to understand that we are not alone, that everything is alive, and that we must respect everything that exists. Through them we have come to understand that Life is priceless, a gift from our primordial ancestors who come from the waters. We are Water, we are Air, we are Fire, we are Earth ... We are one with the Pishimisak. The teachings of our elders are simple and profound. They are born around the Nachak (fire), with the same warmth with which the sun warms the belly of Mother Earth and produces life ... They are here to remind us how to live a beautiful life, without worries and penalties, by letting ourselves to be gently guided by their voices that tell us of a time that comes and goes and in that roundness show us the essential that is only seen with Eye of humility and simplicity ... The Aro iris lends its colors to our looms that weave other ways of being and living in this land. The elders say: We are still alive and we will continue to defend our ancestral right to our way of life. The seeding of water<sup>78</sup> is our duty! We are Root and Sprout (Retoño) ..." (Collective Reflection created to frame the project's vision)<sup>79</sup>.*

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<sup>78</sup> Sembranza del Agua literally translated as "seeding of water" refers to a ceremony to perform Refresco or give an Ofrenda to the spirit of the water who makes water grow.

<sup>79</sup>Excerpt from Project Proposal (original version in Spanish).

He then offered the following summary in the native Namrik language:

*Pishimisak trentan Mananasrøn kutri, pishimisakpe trentan misakmerane chikøpen pirøyu pønrrapelane untak tøka kørípala kemik pishintø wuærøtrappe. Mur kørakwuansrø, nu parøntsiwuansrø, nu kau mera chu kuikucha pi kap mera mèsik kèn, srekøllimisak kørøkøllimisak lata; truyukurri mayelai øsikwuaramik kèn. Nam Misak ampuppe nu yau mèsikwuaupe chish misra ampamik, namchistø wuærøtrappe, namuy køllelan, shurameran shurmeran nachakku wuamintikuan mæra asha maramikèn chimerankucha kan asrtø kèn, nampe piureker, pirøtøuai, nak latai, isik latai ke, pishimisak untaktøka pirø usiyu tap kønsrei...*



Drawing by Nestor Muelas. February 6. 2017.

### **c. Analysis of the information from popular education workshops (May 2017)**

After completing the popular education workshops, we had planned to form a team work that would focus on analysing both the process and results of the participatory research within the AJBD. However, some of the youth who had committed to be part of the team had to go back to university, and elders' and adults' obligations conflicted with our schedule. We therefore needed to find strategies to address time issues. The youth helped in creating informational tables that summarized the discussions of the most relevant activities of the previous popular education workshop. They also designed figures for basic qualitative and quantitative analyses<sup>80</sup>. I made individual video recordings of the elders' and adults' impressions and analysis. Although the sistematizacion did not collectively turn out as I had planned and expected, I acknowledge the value of everyone's contributions in putting all the information together. The community's analytical work and documentation greatly assisted in my later analysis.

### **d. Tampalkuari –TIICA-Misak Participatory Workshop. June 19, 2017**

Keeping in mind learned experiences from the previous participatory process as a significant input for the new project, this workshop was designed to specifically focus on the government-funded project. Freddy Calambas Pillimue and Nestor Muelas presented the analysis of the information produced during popular education workshop's and the community observed that examining AJBD's past experiences and people's skills and ambitions was going to enrich the current process.

Then we began we laid out the objectives of the "Tampalkuari –TIICA-Misak workshop".<sup>81</sup> as follows:

1. To revisit the previous popular education workshop series and collate the information relevant to developing the UN project.
2. To deepen understanding of the challenges and strengths of the Misak territory
3. To foster community commitment for the project.

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<sup>80</sup> See Appendices 3,4, 6 & 7 (original version in Spanish)

<sup>81</sup> It was designed with three members of the AJBD who wanted to practice pop-ed methods (Lorenzo Muelas Tombé, Freddy Calambas and Nestor Muelas).

We recreated a popular education method<sup>82</sup> that we encountered at a previous workshop organised by the funders. The method used a Mandala to visualize and analyze the socio-cultural realities in a visual scheme ordered from the most general to the most specific issues—the parts of a ‘sociocultural universe.’ It allowed participants to observe the way that a community lives on a daily basis and how different activities and their associated contexts have a special and commonly held meaning. With this method it was also possible to identify the risks and threats, and their priority. In our workshop, we replaced the Mandala with an illustration of the ‘Tampalkuari’, the traditional hat showing the community’s cosmovision<sup>83</sup>. The Tampalkuari was used as a pedagogic instrument to analyse and link different cultural and environmental issues. It served as a way to complement previous teachings and knowledge gained from the popular education session to identify Misak people’s biocultural heritage.

Tata Lorenzo Muelas explained how the community’s cosmovision is represented in the Tampalkuari:

*Our handmade ancestral hat is not only a ‘hat,’ it tells the story of our history. The double spiral encircled in our Tampalkuari has been a fundamental concept to our ancestors. It represents the comings and goings in our daily life that are linked to a spiral and its components: the territory, the family unit, and identity. It indicates a reflection that is neither linear nor circular. It is a spiral between dimensions, whose center is at the top. Our history and unique identity is written in the Tampalkuari, but this is hard to explain in western terms because we differentiate not only between past, present and future but also an older past, a recent past and an immediate past. We also place the ‘past’ upfront because it has already passed... This is why our ancestors are in front of us (not behind as they are for western society), showing us the path that they have already walked...”<sup>84</sup>*

The Tampalkuari figure was used to represent the territory and to visualize the many factors that were at play in Misak land. It was made of concentric circles arranged in a spiral, beginning with a center and expanding outward until it created a picture of the whole territory. In groups, the

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<sup>82</sup> All the TIICA’s were required to attend a weekend workshop with the funders and the other supporting organizations in Colombia. The AJBD President and I were delegated to represent the organization in the meeting on June 8-11, 2017. The Mandala tool was designed by Tropenbos, an organization that uses participatory research and popular education methods with local communities in Colombia. Currently, Tropenbos is in charge of organizing the logistics of the TIICAS project workshops. [http://www.tropenbos.org/country\\_programmes/colombia](http://www.tropenbos.org/country_programmes/colombia)

<sup>83</sup> Misak People say that their ‘Tampalkuari’ ‘is a snail in which it is possible to read their history. The origin of history is at the center; it is the starting point of the process of weaving native people’s existence. It is said that the snail rolls out from that center until it reaches the outer circumference. It then winds back in the opposite direction, until it reaches the center again. It is thus conceived as a double movement: not only of unrolling to create the hat, but the other way round, tracing its way back and returning to the center. The story also unfolds in this double movement.

<sup>84</sup> This quote is part of a conversation we had during the workshop in April, 2017, with the TIICA project funders. They invited us to draw a mandala to explain the territory in which the project would be held. Lorenzo remarked that instead of using the Mandala shape he would prefer the Tampalkuari image due to its cultural meaning.



participants placed the most significant elements that defined their respective Tampalkuari and the centre—the heart of the territory. In the second circle, they identified cultural knowledge and practices that sustain and strengthen the centre. In the third circle, they placed the risks and threats to the inner two circles. The outermost layer contained actions or possible ways to strengthen the territory. The design followed a coherent structure which displayed the correlation of the elements of each circle.

### Tampalkuari-TIICA-Misak



#### Method

5 groups denoted by numbers (1,2,3,4,5)  
 40 minutes discussion (10 min. for each level of the Tampalkuari image)  
 10 minutes writing reflections on color cards (Each level is a different color)  
 10 minutes in groups creating their own Tampalkuari  
 25 minutes to socialize in plenary (5 min, for each group)  
 5 minutes to silently contemplate all the Tampalkuari exhibited on a wall  
 20 minutes conversation circle (Conclusions)

Groups 1, 2, and 4 located the home fire, or Nachak, at the centre (the first circle or the 'heart of the territory'), because, they argued, that is the place where education begins. Group 3 placed a couple, a woman and man, because they considered parents to be the centre of family from which society begins. Group 5 (children) placed the two main lakes of the Wampi Territory (Laguna de Ñimbe y Laguna de Piendamó) which give birth to the main river that crosses the territory at the center. These lakes are the foundation of the traditional Wampi Cosmovision from which their culture and everything else emerged. I asked the children why they had placed the lakes at the center. They responded that they had once seen something similar in a booklet at school. It made me think that while on the one hand that it was encouraging to see that schools used such pedagogic materials to teach children, on the other I felt it was a contradiction because children were learning about their tradition from schools books rather than from the pedagogy of their land and elders' stories.

For the second and third circles, the children brought a unique perspective. They placed the four elements—water, fire, land and earth—in the second circle, as that which was most valuable in the territory. They placed alcoholism, suicide, and ecosystem degradation as risks in the third circle. The groups of adults showed the native language, collaborative work, native spiritual values, traditional food system, indigenous medicine, and artistic expressions in the second circles, referring to the constituents (knowledge and practices) of their cultural heritage. In the third circles, outside economic interests and foreign practices were identified as key risks and threats.



All of the adult groups identified the urgency to initiate actions to strengthen the territory through processes of self-analysis. They also identified the need to recover indigenous methodologies, knowledge, values and practices, strengthen traditional education (education at home-Nachak, and education from land), reclaim traditional food, native medicine, and teachings linked to land protection, and revive of the native language, artistic expressions and cultural recreational games.

The children ably identified the content of each level of the Tampalkuari and, revealing an acute understanding of the complex social realities of the territory, proposed innovative actions to strengthen it:

*Adults should not kill the bear, or get drunk or poison themselves. We should plant food for the bears in the tundra and flowers and grass for the cows in our plots near our homes so the cows do not have go up to the high mountains. Families must advise those who misbehave—and if they disobey, they must be locked up at home so they cannot go out to get drunk, kill themselves, kill the bear or burn the mountains.*



The children's impressive arguments left us speechless. Their interpretation confronted the adults, who recognized they had overlooked many of the aspects identified by the children—realities they witness every day that adults tend to ignore. They remarked that the youngest members of the community had given them a tremendous life lesson by identifying the two lakes as the core of the territory and the four elements as the pillars that sustain that centre, and expressing their concerns about suicide, alcoholism, deforestation, the threats to the Andean bear and other issues faced by the Misak people. They did acknowledge that issues such as alcoholism and weakening of family ties had been discussed in the second day of popular education workshops, but the perspective of the children revealed the pervasiveness and gravity of these issues. Through this exercise we deepened our understanding of previously discussed issues, including how the research project was going to be implemented and how the tools of the popular education workshops were going to be applied. Many compared the results of this exercise with “A tree of problems, a forest of solutions” activity, but found that the visual depiction of the Tampalkuari more appropriately aligned with their cultural perspective.



We concluded the activity with a conversational circle to establish individual roles and community responsibilities to develop the UN project. We named a secretary, area coordinators and their assistants, and formed a team to undertake logistic and administrative tasks.

#### d. Technical and Administrative planning, April – June, 2017



I supported the methodological and financial planning of the TIICA project in my capacity as a member of the administrative team. For almost two months we met every night to share ideas, outline our objectives and expected outcomes, and design methods and activities to achieve them. It proved to be an interesting and engaging participatory process that provided the community team with popular education tools for planning.

They observed that through the process they learned and developed skills to help them realize the importance of outlining organizational strategies, like developing methods, identifying technical aspects and considering financial constraints and opportunities, before beginning the implementation of a project. They also acknowledged how popular education's participatory approach had engendered a sense of belonging.



While the planning was underway, we held two meetings with community members to generate the social impact needed for successful and meaningful implementation. The first meeting was with indigenous Misak leaders to present AJBD's mission, vision, and objectives of the approved project. We secured permission from the Indigenous Council of the Native Reserve (Cabildo Indígena Del Resguardo de Guambia) to execute the project on native territory (a requirement from the funders). In the second meeting we signed an Agreement of Collaboration with the coordinators of the environmental program of the Native Reserve (Programa Ambiente de Vida Guambiano).



### Squeezing the “Happy Accident”

Both my academic participatory research and the government-funded projects were designed to respond to the community’s needs. The outputs of the popular education process served as a baseline to deepen the diagnosis of the community’s social, cultural and environmental situation. For instance, we transferred the information from the activity “A tree of problems, a forest of solutions” to the “Tampalkuari Workshop” to identify the actions needed to address relevant issues in the native reserve through the project. We took advantage of the unexpected opportunity of the convergence of both projects to not only support the revival of the AJBD, but also address the cultural and environmental struggles within the Misak community. The participatory process did not stop when the grant opportunity presented itself. Rather, it helped us *seize the moment* to develop, strengthen and achieve our collectively developed action plan, and continue developing our participatory approach. The United Nations project, which fit well with the community’s needs, supports strategies that meet the following characteristics<sup>85</sup>:

<sup>85</sup> Characteristic defined by ICCA Consortium: <https://www.iccaconsortium.org/index.php/discover>

1. Indigenous people or local communities have a strong and profound connection with their territory. 2. People or community is a major player in decision-making and implementing those decisions. 3. A community's governance decisions and management efforts lead to the conservation of nature and to the associated conservation of cultural values and community well-being.

Our project is envisioned as a strategy to reactivate the "Osik Waramik Purek Tapshik" community based-model, and designed as an experimental model of education within the Misak indigenous reserve. Using the native creation story (Law of Origin) as a guiding principle to rethink and re-appropriate the territory, the project will open spaces for the community to reflect and think critically about how they have historically interacted with the land. This is important to generate strategies for self-awareness and recognize the urgency to recover indigenous knowledge and spiritual practices related to land protection, which will allow the Misak community to safeguard traditional practices, and to resignify and revitalize their biocultural memory to guarantee cultural permanence.

The second government grant (from the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Tourism) also responds to the requirements and objectives of the AJBD. This project, which has not yet commenced, will allow us to develop an ecotourism plan at the botanical garden aimed at improving the quality of life of community members.

One of my responsibilities as a member of the AJBD is to support the organization through my own knowledge, and personal and professional experience. My involvement in preparing the project proposal, planning and networking has generated both personal and collective satisfaction. The financial support to our organization has given us more than money, it has given us back our confidence. I am excited and hopeful because both projects will enable a concrete strategy to reactivate the community-based model, and will benefit the AJBD and the native community and peasants, a large number of whom are associated with the AJBD. This is no longer a faraway dream, but one that is already materializing. I am fortunate to have had the chance to put in my contribution—a seed for the future—to strengthen our organization's mission, which is "committed to a comprehensive intervention at a community level in order to improve the quality of life, wellbeing and livelihoods of local peoples through the conservation of the Andean rainforest ecosystem." It has once again found fertile ground to take root.



## Chapter 5

### FINAL DISCUSSION & LEARNED EXPERIENCES

*The radical, committed to human liberation, does not become the prisoner of a 'circle of certainty' within which reality is also imprisoned. On the contrary, the more radical the person is, the more fully he or she enters into reality so that, knowing it better, he or she can better transform it. This individual is not afraid to confront, to listen, and to see the world unveiled. This person is not afraid to meet the people or to enter into dialogue with them. This person does not consider himself or herself the proprietor of history or of all people, or the liberator of the oppressed; but he or she does commit himself or herself, within history, to fight at their side. — Paulo Freire-*





## Farewell...

Three days before my departure to Canada, I visited the elder Taita Javier at his home. While entering the place I commented how glad I was I could come to visit my best-loved teacher at my favourite classroom. I was warmly invited to sit around the Nachak and offered quinoa soup flavored with onion and herbs... Sigh...! The smoke from the kitchen gave colours to the walls and texture to the roof; traditional artefacts hung all around, people sat in little wooden chairs around the Nachak, their indistinct chatter in the native language blended with the sound of the crackling fire....Hmmm I was transported to several memories from yesteryears....I saw myself collecting and stacking wood, making fire to cook, getting suffocated by the smoke and feeling tired of that life. At another time I was breastfeeding my baby, or simply relaxing my body and silently contemplating the fire where I used to value my modest way of life... After a while of being immersed in those thoughts, the elder brought me back to the present with a story that once again revealed his wisdom and knowledge about Misak traditions.... "It is here, next to the fire where we plant the placenta of a newborn baby... The placenta is the most profound bond we have with our mother and mother earth...it itself is alive so it cannot go into the regular waste..." The amazing idea of plantar la placenta (planting the placenta) in the kitchen so captivated my soul which was thirsty for the vital meanings of life, that I could not hold back the tears that fell down directly to my soup, giving it a new flavour: A taste of admiration and gratitude for the privilege of listening to that story mixed with a handful of bitterness for not knowing where my own placenta had landed. I told the taita that my mother said that at the time when I was born, children's placentas ended up in the city landfill, so I could image what happened to my own bag of waters. I mentioned that years later, I had heard that placentas were priceless (precious) for cosmetic industries. Taita replied in surprise: "I'm so sorry to hear that. I don't know which option is worse for the placentas: ending up in a garbage lot or being sold...." But, the taita's story of the placenta didn't end there! If you want to learn more about it, I come back to it in the following pages in the excerpt "education comes from roots up..."

The conversation with the elder gave me the energy to walk up the high mountain to say goodbye to Misak land. I followed four adults and three children who guided me along a two hour walk to the top of a hill, to El Chak Undak or Valle Sagrado. The landscape, full of dandelions and dragonflies surrendering to the sunset mixed with our presences, songs and dances with the wind of the heights. A fire in honor of the spirits of the valley kept our bones warm and our talk in grace....Time to do a refresco to say thanks and good bye for now to the pishimisak for being present, to the ancestors for giving us the needed support and to the people who opened their hearts to make this journey possible. Drawing in the horizon, the night let us know that it was the time to go home... We arrived at the house of Taita Anselmo around 7 pm. At the entrance of the patio, Floresmiro, Oscar and Diego welcomed me with an Andean flute melody.... What a wonderful surprise!.. At that moment I knew why most of the folks did not come to the sacred valley... They were busy preparing a party for me! I felt so honored with the music, dance, words, gifts and tears. I will forever keep alive the people's heart-felt expression which weave a diverse reality in which the 'other' always counts.

Bye-bye for now. I did not leave this Land. This was just a recess...!

### **5.1. How did the academic framework serve to structure the proposal?**

As I mentioned earlier, some years ago I found myself living and working with marginalized communities in Colombia. At that time, I lacked experience and had a very cursory understanding of education as an instrument to confront social injustice and inequality, and so I had to learn critical thinking skills while solving the equations of daily life. Through my Master's program, and especially in developing this proposal, I better understood the critical perspectives and methodologies that would enable and empower community learning processes aimed at social transformation.

#### **Linking my Research Project and my Plan of Study**

My Master's studies focused on examining the Biocultural Diversity Conservation approach in indigenous territories, while exploring anticolonial frameworks and methodological perspectives to strengthen indigenous people's ways of knowing and living. My Plan of Study was essentially thought of as a platform to find points of convergence between indigenous and western knowledges. During the first year of the MES program, I pursued learning strategies directed to analyze the inextricable link between nature and culture that underlies indigenous thinking, by highlighting the significance of traditional knowledges for environmental conservation as a means of indigenous peoples' cultural resurgence and self-determination (Aranda, M. Dagua, A. & Vasco, L. G 2010; Maffi, 2015; Martinez Alier, 2002; Montoya, 2013). Simultaneously, I also examined how indigenous conceptualization radically differs from colonial state practices and scientific theories related to environmental conservation (Bordirsky, M. & Johnson, J. 2008; McGregor 2009; Simpson, 2014), and the relevance of certain western critical perspectives based on social justice, such as Popular Education, Participatory Research, Collaborative Research, Queer and Feminist Pedagogies and Environmental Education, to challenge hegemonic prevailing practices in education and research. The acquired knowledge enriched my POS' objectives and supported my project and activist work beyond the academic sphere. Firstly, through the biocultural diversity conservation framework, I explored the interconnection between nature and culture as it is tangibly manifested within the AJBD community-based model, and investigated the factors and actors that directly affected the organization's survival. Secondly, the framework of Indigenous knowledges helped me understand the relevance of cultural values and practices in education, as well as structure the contextual methodology of the project. The knowledge of Indigenous people and peasants of the AJBD established the main principles guiding the participatory research. As shown in Chapters 2 and 3, AJBD

members participated through constant dialogue during the stages of project design and implementation. They provided cultural concepts such as The Minga of Knowledge and participated in defining the goals and objectives of the project, making sure to align them with local needs. During the execution phase, community knowledge led the process in which the past, present and future were revisited. Giving relevance to community epistemologies and methodologies was intended to recognise their struggles and needs from their own perspective. It brought together cultural, educational, ecological and political discussions at the individual and community levels. Finally, the effectiveness of popular education as an anticolonial methodology was corroborated through the process. At a community level, popular education contributed to empower AJBD's organization as they were the protagonists in knowledge production. On a personal level, the series of workshops showed me how knowledge from pop-ed is socially constructed, and assisted me to critically think about how the project worked to deconstruct elite pedagogical paradigms that reproduce hierarchical structures of power. My comprehension of locating the community's needs at the core of the research process and my role as a facilitator were essential to establish a critical methodological path. This process located us as learners and teachers simultaneously. The three-fold strategy of this research project—biocultural diversity approach, indigenous knowledge and popular education—found a common place for integration. Combining indigenous ways of knowing and the popular education approach generated an intercultural methodology based on mutual respect and recognition of each method of knowing. The strengthening of the biocultural community-based model was only feasible because the indigenous people and peasants of the AJBD were involved through the entire process of knowledge production. As a co-researcher, my role, more than a conventional researcher who knew finished truths, was as a collaborator who was able to facilitate some of the tools and strategies learned during my MES studies. This process has ended for my academic objective but is ongoing for the community's aims and my own activist work that I started long ago.

### **Self-location counts**

Choosing a theme to develop a research project should count not only with our academic interests but with our personal story, history and social location. The course 'Reshaping Research with Aboriginal People' supported my understanding of the relevance of self-location in processes of research within an indigenous context. It helped me recognize my role as a researcher whose

Latin American background would eventually define my research concerns. I learnt that knowledge, research and ethics form an intertwined triad that should be examined carefully before beginning any research process that involves indigenous peoples. Kovach (2009) articulates that defining one's location through reflexivity helps to identify the researcher's inquiry, because the theories, practices and biases that have formed their worldview will determine their research methods (p. 42). In some western anti-oppressive approaches, understanding the position of a researcher brings awareness of power disparities in society and for taking action to further social justice (Strega, 2005, p. 224). Self-location seems to be crucial to take personal responsibility, to be conscious of research limits and scope and to understand the role that the researcher can play from a "favored" position. Popular Education highlights that finding one's position in education can also enable the recognition of the differences and connections between the people involved in the research, drawing strength from diversity. By recognizing our social, cultural and political differences and identifying our connections, we can act collectively to bring about social change.<sup>86</sup>

Some of the ethical considerations I faced during project development were related to my social location and self-reflexivity. My social and academic accountability to this project was crossed by both my position as a researcher and my role as a member co-founder of the community organization. Bearing in mind my double location, I wondered how I could find the interplay of our distinct worldviews from an ethics of respect and recognizing our differences through openness, collaboration and awareness of our shared struggles. By acknowledging my cultural roots, I have come to realize that the many fights that I have gone through were not different from the struggles of thousands of marginalized people in Latin America. It led me to recognize both my ancestral heritage engrained in a history of social injustices, as well my social responsibility as one of the 'others' that have had the 'privilege' to obtain a 'higher educational degree'<sup>87</sup>. My research proposal was born first of all as an imminent need to settle a personal debt with my past. A past that claimed the need to be healed, revised, and explored again to distil the wisdom and challenges of lived experiences. Before enrolling in the MES program, I often felt overwhelmed by emotions and feelings of culpability, because in some way I sensed that I had abandoned the community and that my unexpected absence was one reason that the community-based model was weakened. However, it was mainly through my Plan of Study's learning strategies<sup>88</sup> that I could reflect on the enormous work that I did as a co-founder of the

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<sup>86</sup> *Catalyst Centre One-Stop Pop-Ed Shop Worker Co-op.*

<sup>87</sup> Reflection Notes from the course Reshaping Research with Aboriginal People. MES Program 2016.

<sup>88</sup> Popular Education for Social Change (ENVS 6150) Reshaping Research with Aboriginal People (ENVS 6152) Ecologies and Sustainability in the Global South (ENVS 6117) Food, Land and Culture (ENVS 5011) & Individual Directed Study (ENVS 6599)

AJBD, as well as confront my own anxiety and frustration about not taking part in it when, after the Colombian political situation worsened, I was forced to move to Canada.

Coming from Latin America, one of the most devastated regions of the so called 'developing world,' surviving the complexity of the internal armed conflict in my homeland, being part of the Latino diaspora in the past decade, and living as a 'mestiza,' 'woman-of-colour'—part of the wrongly named 'invisible minorities'; in both places I know that I am part of those who are called 'others'. I am the 'other' whose family was displaced from their land in the '50s; the 'other' who worked as an ally of rural communities, and who by doing 'irreverent acts' to strength community wellbeing and livelihoods, had to leave her homeland for political reasons. I am also the 'other' who is currently 'enjoying the advantages of the exile' by living in a 'multicultural' developed country that advocates for humans rights worldwide but whose own native people are still fighting for their rights.

Being aware of a researcher's social location could be key to bridging the gap, to dissolving the subject-object power relationship within research processes. When, in your personal history, you embody the struggles of the 'other' that you attempt to research, there are ethical imperatives that limit locating yourself as a mere observer, or as an actor in a utilitarian space where you are the one who has the knowledge and hence the power to shape others' lives according to your own knowledge or preconceptions.

I had the amazing opportunity to go back to the community that I worked with to take up my unfinished activist work again. In many ways the research proposal helped remind me of who I was, who I am, how I have constructed my lived and conceptual framework in my research life, and importantly, how all of this has been interwoven in a loom of theory and practice at an individual and community level. After more than a decade of absence, the enthusiasm of the re-encounter with the community in my homeland brought to the surface so many repressed emotions. It made me think that our sensitive conversations, our hugs, tears and words from the heart, were impossible to include in my planning and scheduling. How do you plan for those 'things' called sympathy, empathy and friendship? How was I going to reconcile my feelings of being an old friend and an appreciated member of the AJBD organization in the South with my

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privilege of being part of the academic elite in the North...? Would I be researcher or friend, investigator or facilitator? Would be I a simple spectator, or a SpectACtor?<sup>89</sup> Or perhaps I myself could end up being (becoming) a subject of knowing?

A strong claim of deconstructive/anticolonial methodologies is that it rejects being “pure” and dualistic oppositions and totalizations; indeed, it acknowledges and openly embraces ambiguity and dialectics. Being both an insider and outsider made the project at hand unavoidably a process of constant negotiation.

## **5.2 Knowledge**

### **Community needs upfront**

Ethical research must be willing to place community struggles upfront. Taking account of the protocols, policies and guidelines established by community criteria is absolutely imperative within indigenous research contexts (Kovach, 2009, Smith 2012 & Wilson 2008). In decolonizing methodologies, Linda Smith (1999) considers that indigenous participants must conduct, own, and benefit from research that is done *with them*. (p. 12)

As this project was configured to essentially meet community needs more than produce a ‘study’ in a strictly academic sense, objectives, methods, results and forms of dissemination were jointly created, discussed and approved with the community members. They were not just participants in the project, but co-researchers through the whole process, and so without a doubt, they own it, and are its direct beneficiaries. Popular education’s STM spiral model fit the community’s requirements and created the epistemological structure to set an organizational route for the community-based model’s resurgence.

### **Pop-ED Methods: Seize the Moment/Sistematizacion**

My research project was epistemologically grounded in specific approaches of Popular Education as preparation to actively work towards social change. The seize the moment /sistematizacion methodology was used in AJBD’s context to explore critical ways of producing

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<sup>89</sup> SpectActor is a term coined by Augusto Boal, who developed it in his “Theatre of the Oppressed” as “a specific critique of the idea of passive spectators of theatre...He developed the highly participatory form of theatre that is the Theatre of the Oppressed which is NOT performed to spectators but to SpectActors” Chris Cavanagh, personal communication.

knowledge, gathering data and analyzing information, while empowering the community to create and participate in their own research. The process generated reflections on how to improve the community based-model and how to strengthen the organization's structural capacity.

I had initially prepared the plan in a very organized way and proposed a list specific objectives, goals and timelines. However, as I carried out this research project, I had to confront my own fears, doubts and expectations, because walking the heuristic path proposed by Popular Education challenged me to unlearn the learned. Exercising creativity, being able to wonder, to be amazed, to flow at the community's pace and to find out that there are no "absolute and finished truths" means being open to the unknown and unpredictable that leads one to decolonised ways of learning. In excavating my own understanding on popular education concepts I came across the anthropological foundation of Freire' pedagogy of the human as an unfinished being. Being aware of this incompleteness makes us educable. For Freire, love and hope are ontological necessities to revise history, but history is a possibility that takes place in a scenario of politics, where neutrality is impossible. So the centrality of the ethics of education is fundamentally a question and a form of power, whose legitimacy must be problematized.

### **Methods are not neutral**

The experience of learning was determined by the selection of pedagogic strategies, methods and techniques, which made palpable the dialogical road of theory and practice with a simultaneous interweaving of learning by doing. Through a combination of various tools of popular education, this project created a unique instance of popular education praxis.

The methods used permitted that subjectivity merged with the place to transform, live within and fill it with degrees of knowledges, challenges, unique stories and experiences. As we defined a common interest as a group, the place of learning was politicized, humanized and inhabited subjectively. Even when the exterior aspects remained unchanged, our memories, anecdotes, encounters, and sorrows were lived with intensity and transformed within us.

We used a mix of indigenous and pop-ed methods to identify issues and struggles from past and present experiences and to determine potential for the future. Those methods permitted us to advance in a non-linear and innovative way of learning by thinking laterally and combining systems thinking and methodologies to create new understanding. We also worked to deconstruct-reconstruct ways of knowing, modelling and scaffolding from whole to parts and

from general to particular. The *Minga de Saberes* was the participatory platform in which the following methods found points of convergence in the spiral model:

**Ceremonies:** Served to reinforce indigenous methodologies based on spiritual values and cosmovision.

**Conversational circles:** Fortified traditional methods of communication.

**Story-telling:** Shared people's experiences while approaching learning to narrative.

**Non-verbal theater:** Applied bodily expressions and kinaesthetic skills to thinking and learning.

**Community drawing:** Used symbols, images and visual metaphors to understand concepts and content.

**Worktable discussions:** Opened spaces to groups for analytical thinking to identify challenges and advantages of the process.

**Mapping:** Allowed an explicit mapping of the local context; representing and visualizing social, cultural, environmental, and educational concerns to picture pathways of constructing knowledge for action.

**Land and community links:** Connected content/information to local lands and traditional knowledge (place-based learning) to center local knowledge and apply learning from the community.

**Dance, music and poetry:** Provided a festive spirit to the whole journey.

### **The Praxis of the Spiral Model:**

The spiral model in Popular Education<sup>90</sup> challenges unequal power relationships, which begins with the experience and knowledge of the participants to generate a movement of praxis (theory and practice). In this project, it brought philosophical principles into action in a back and forth, circular process, where Action-Reflection-Action were permanently interwoven in planning and execution. This model created a circular path to understand who we were (naming ourselves), what we wanted to achieve and why, as well as to identify contextual forces at play and plan for action.

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<sup>90</sup>The STM spiral model that I employed as reference was created by popular educators in Canada under 'Naming The Moment'. [http://catalystcentre.ca/wpcontent/uploads/Naming\\_the\\_Moment\\_Manual.pdf](http://catalystcentre.ca/wpcontent/uploads/Naming_the_Moment_Manual.pdf). It has evolved according to different popular education developments and contexts. I followed the latest version of this model (Updated by Chris Cavanagh, and enriched through this project). See Syllabus FES, fall 2012: <http://www.catalystcentre.ca/wp-content/uploads/syllabus3125-2012.pdf>.



## Unwinding the spiral

I propose to argue here that through this particular project, the spiral model has been enriched. In popular education “challenging unequal power relationships” is at the center of the spiral from which the seven steps unfold. However, by being coherent with the intercultural context of the AJBD and specifically with indigenous ways of learning, our spiral was culturally-oriented. We located at the heart of the spiral the community’s methods and cultural practices to fortify cultural traditions and knowledge. In the indigenous context, the centre of knowledge production starts with traditional knowledge, ceremonies and ritual practices, and with asking permission and showing gratitude to spirits and ancestors of the territory; and so the research could not begin without it. It also recognises the interconnectedness and equal status of all living beings. The first opening ceremony and *ofrenda* ritual recognized the tutelary spirits and dissolved the egocentric vision of the human being as the centre of everything. Starting the process with this ceremony also corroborated popular education’s foregrounding of place-based local knowledge and indigenous pedagogies as a mechanism to initiate social change. I pose my own queries to open a door and shed light on my understanding of that premise: What is the meaning of a ritual/ceremony in a pedagogic context? How do we recognise the presence of nature spirits as givers and/or constructors of knowledge? How can non-human beings determine, inspire or sustain human struggles?

### **Spiral steps: Our practice as a source of learning**

#### **Step 1. Setting the Stage for Democratic Communication**

This first step lays the foundation for equal, respectful and open communication. It addresses the communication needs and abilities of all participants, and establishes a commonly reached goal for democratic communication. In the context of this project, “Setting the stage for democratic communication” confronted unequal power relationships in that the requirements of each person’s communication were attended to under principles of equity. Since “nobody knows everything, nobody ignores everything”<sup>91</sup>, opening the space to listen everyone’s opinion meant recognising that every individual had a voice and experience valuable to the process. Listening to each person gave us different insights based on gender, age, ethnicity and interests. This

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<sup>91</sup> The definition of humility in pedagogy. In “Paulo Freire. Constructor de Sueños”  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6fQCIXj-hIQ>.

activity also permitted the identification of those who were interested in fortifying the organization.

## **Step 2. Guidelines for a Harmonious Coexistence**

This step was added to the popular education spiral in this project. The community proposed the need to work on principles that would ensure a peaceful and efficient journey. Although people disliked the idea of making rules, they were aware of the need to find strategies for the workshops to run smoothly and laid out 'Guidelines for a harmonious coexistence based on cultural principles of respect, solidarity and commitment.

## **Step 3. Naming Ourselves -Identifying ourselves and our interests**

As the title of the step indicates, this process helps to critically identify the composition of the group and situate individual and collective identities. It asks what our perception of the world is, and how this has been influenced by our particular histories and identities. It also provides the opportunity to make known the interests of individuals and the group.

As explained earlier, Misak people symbolically encrypt their history in the Tampalkuari or traditional hat, which is a spiral that locates the law of origin at its centre. This is comparable to the spiral of popular education in which the process starts with what people know, i.e. the knowledge of the participants. In the Misak context, "Naming Ourselves" referred first to their self-identification as children of the Pishimisak or duende who takes the form of water, the source of Misak existence. At different moments, the indigenous participants underlined that their identity is directly related to their cosmovision, in which the knowledge of the territory, the norms of behavior and cultural precepts are encoded.

Through the participatory activities on the first day, we started identifying ourselves and our interests. For example, the "Chivas' Trip" activity led us to begin "Naming ourselves in relation to others". It revealed us through personal experiences (who we were) but importantly, showed how our individual struggles were connected to that of others. It created a sense of identity, solidarity and acquaintance. The activity "Group Composition: How do I describe myself" allowed us to individually name ourselves while presenting who we were, and showed how the recognition of each person's exceptionality represented a particular perception of the world, each being shaped by the intersections of identity, race, age, and belief systems.

The exercise “Community Expectations and Interests” exhibited individual and collective anticipations and hopes, such as knowing past and present experiences, learning about other peoples’ work, abilities and skills, and gaining knowledge to fortify the organization’s mission and objectives. The activity also demonstrated that the interests of the AJBD go beyond reviving the specific community-based model to create scenarios that empower the agency and participation of local communities in environmental matters, keeping in mind the influence of the political situation in Colombia<sup>92</sup>.

We came back to naming ourselves on the third day. Activities such as “Dance of Affinities” and “Hatching our Dreams” allowed people to collectively and individually recognize their talents and dreams. It also provided information to visualise the human potential within the AJBD and accordingly link them to the areas of work (*estantantillos*) to set mid- to long- term project goals. The “dreams” activity also showed how every person perceived the world and described their innermost hopes to transform their realities..

Through these activities, the constituency of the AJBD was defined as a heterogeneous group comprised of people from different ethnicities, cultural backgrounds, occupations, ages and belief systems, who shared a common interest in working towards social justice, cultural recovery and environmental protection.

**Step 4. Naming The Issues** (What are the political issues for which popular education is the / an answer?)

This step helps in identifying and prioritizing through collective and democratic participation, the critical issues that the group faces. The specific histories of the issues/struggles are analyzed to identify key moments to determine how to move forward and lay down short and long-term

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<sup>92</sup> A Colombian government decree, currently in preparation, will empower indigenous communities as environmental authorities. It will grant the councils competence to approve or reject environmental permits and to administer, control, monitor and punish, inappropriate actions and interventions upon the natural resources within their jurisdiction. This authority will be based on concepts such as cosmovision, without involving a technical analysis, invoking in their considerations the ethnic chapter of the peace agreement with FARC. However, it is estimated that it will be a slow process and require resources and community organization because of the strong mining interests in the region. Original Source in Spanish, my translation.. <http://m.portafolio.co/economia/los-cabildos-una-nueva-autoridad-ambiental-511587>.

goals. Naming the most critical issue/struggle(s) is accompanied by also naming the risks, threats and contradictions around the issue.

In our participatory process, “Naming the Issues” opened a space to analyse how the political forces and economic interests created past and present problems of the AJBD. The last two activities of the first day, Storytelling (“Do you remember when...”) and the performance “Naming our discomfort silently” were used as strategies to examine critical moments of the past as well the historical roots of the struggles. The armed conflict and political interest by local politicians in the past were identified as the strongest barriers to the AJBD to move forward. On the second day, the activity “Learning from Both Sides” allowed us to continue naming the issues but focused on the present time. While identifying the advantages and challenges of the AJBD, knowledge, skill, experiences and capacities were recognised as its main resources. In contrast, we also detected lack of interest by some members, discrimination of women and children, and community reliance on external models of development as factors that were negatively impacting the cultural and territorial autonomy of the organization and many rural communities in the region.

**Step 5. Crafting Meaning / Assessing the Forces** (What do you/we need to know more about regarding political struggle/change?)

This step locates the identified issues in their larger social, political and economic context. It asks what are the forces that create and influence the issues, how are they related, and what agents and networks of opposition / support work around the issue.

In our project, for instance, “A Tree of Problems, a Forest of Solutions” named present issues and forces at play while setting contextual information to craft new meaning. It provided new information of the most relevant issues that challenged the AJBD’s members. The indigenous community identified problems related to cultural erosion, family decomposition, foreign educational models, external agricultural system and ecological degradation. The peasant community claimed that the apathy of the government brought displacement and poverty. This activity made us reflect on who is with us and who is against us on those issues. But it also helped us identify potential collaborators, such grassroots organizations, academic institutions, and national and international agencies that provide support to local initiatives through funding.

Through the activity “Hatching our Dreams” we reflected on how the materialization of people’s dreams, and the resurgence of the AJBD are partially contingent on Colombia’s political situation which needs to be constantly monitored<sup>93</sup>. We also analysed that most of the dreams of the AJBD members were similar to those of rural people across the world who struggle to survive. We were not surprised that in the Global South, basic human rights are denied, and so people’s dreams in the wrongly called ‘developing world’ are mostly related to overcoming oppression, poverty, war, isolation and displacement. It seems that exercising the right to live a worthwhile life is unreachable. Thus, we felt that dreams of people should be an essential component of educational processes because they bring into account the most profound expectations of changing power structures and systems of domination.

### **Step 6. Planning For Action**

Putting together the teachings from the previous steps, “Planning for action” identifies the actions to address the issues, the agents, allies and collaborators, and the strengths and weaknesses of the group, all of which determine the possibilities and constraints of the actions envisioned.

The research process took an unexpected turn because of the approval of government funds. Thus, once the first grant was approved, we used all our time and energy towards methodological and financial planning (See Chapter 4).

The “Tampalkuari activity” built on the information previously produced during the popular education workshops and provided us with a deeper understanding of the context, issues and challenges. It also helped us envision what people wanted to do (goals and objectives) through the UN grant and what were their capacities to achieve it. We defined roles and responsibilities and the actions needed to reach each objective. Parallel to the planning process, it was necessary to start forming alliances with local authorities and organizations to obtain permission and support during project execution. This experience was extremely worthwhile in providing my initial research proposal with richer insight and even generating substantial changes in its goal and objectives and the sistematización of its outcomes.

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<sup>93</sup><https://www.theworldweekly.com/reader/view/magazine/2017-11-09/the-struggle-for-peace-in-colombia/10362>  
<https://www.crisisgroup.org/latin-america-caribbean/andes/colombia/post-conflict-colombia-international-potential-peace> (Implication of Colombian peace agreement in a larger context)

## **Step 7. Taking Action**

To successfully complete plans for action, a leading question was: How could we break free from old restraints and present limitations to freely pursue new opportunities for the organization? Although a vast majority of the community participated in the workshops series, the internal dynamics of the group revealed that not all who were keen on committing to the new project were able to do so due to other pressures, while others who showed enthusiasm for participating, were later reluctant to commit their time and energy. This often meant that initiating activities fell on the shoulders of a few proactive members, which did not reflect the democratic composition of the organisation. These attitudes are understandable because members often find themselves at a crossroads. On the one hand, they want to revive their cultural and traditional systems, but at the same time have become part of systems that impose financial pressures. Reconciling the economic needs of AJBD members with environmental protection requires the development of alternative livelihoods aimed at community wellbeing. Through the execution of the two government projects, the AJBD has initiated a path to act upon some of the issues identified during the research project.

## **Step 8. Evaluation**

The 'evaluation' step takes stock of the information, analysis and discussions gathered through the previous steps to determine to what extent their goals were successfully met. It asks important questions about efficiency (how well did we identify and discuss the issues and plan future action steps?), representation (did we adequately represented those who are affected the most?), and expectations (how well did the activities meet the expectations of the group?).

Overall, the evaluation made by the community showed that we accomplished the goals and objectives of the research project because popular education encouraged a collaborative identification of the conceptual and methodological structure to revive the community based-model. In this sense, the STM method helped us to recognize the challenges and struggles and contextualize them within the past, present and future. From the past, we identified learned experiences from internal failures and successes that resulted from the external political restraints that affected the agency of the community. In the present, we analysed current issues faced by the organization and local communities as well the human and natural resources available. We also seized the moment through the conjuncture of the government fund, which represented a concrete strategy for the community to take action in the short-term. However,

more time and community commitment is required to design a mid-, and long-term action plan. I believe there is an urgent need for a more critical examination, which would benefit from further workshops to analyse not only project outcomes, but the processes as well.

The implementation of this project contributed to strengthen both my MES studies and the AJBD needs. I have made explicit the broader linkages between my academic and activist goals and the community's needs through the sistematización of this experience. However, I admit I was conflicted because I felt I did not accomplish sistematización according to the ideal model, which requires the active participation of the whole community from the beginning to the end. However, reality unavoidably diverges from an idealized model, and while the project did not conform to it, I nonetheless honoured the process:

*In the idealized model it is fair to say that active presence and participation is the preferred strategy. But there are numerous reasons that such cannot happen and to force that to happen or to wait for the conditions for that to happen could mean the failure of the project, a missing of the "moment" if you will. And so, you adapted to circumstance by doing videos. This FITS entirely well in the overall model if the relationships of accountability and reciprocity were respected. So even if it is a different form of participation, it is not contradictory to the spirit and principles of sistematización. To be fair, if one were to force participation then that WOULD contradict the principles. If the community approved of the adaptation to circumstance - i.e. they were okay with the video documentation - then the principles of sistematización were met<sup>94</sup>.*

### **5.3 Lesson learned**

#### **Excavating the lessons of Pop-ED**

Popular education not only provided me with the methods and practical tools for designing and planning the project but also helped me articulate the political vision for my research. Through a combination of its tools, this project represented a unique instance of popular education praxis.

As the project proposal was directed to place community needs upfront over the mere production of an 'academic research paper' it found a suitable method in popular education's participatory research approach to empower the agency of people involved—not simply as participants, but central actors and co-researchers through the entire process. It was designed keeping in mind how they may attend to their own needs and strengths, build their capacity, and promote education and leadership.

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<sup>94</sup> Feedback of Chris Cavanagh during my Chapter 4's revision. November 15 -2017.

The ludic dimension of popular education creatively enriched the participatory process. The playful techniques brought humor, satire, drama, surprise and the exaggeration of a social reality that in itself tends to be dramatic and vivid. These techniques transgressed authoritarian and established spaces and enabled people to fully 'abandon' themselves during the adventure of reinventing reality. The place of learning transformed into an arena for debate and recreating new meaning to place the subject as the constructor of knowledge. Unlearning to learn, learning by doing and playing while learning intertwined to make palpable the dialogical journey of theory and practice.

The process of sistematización of this particular experience has taught me that it might be a route to understanding, learning and theorizing the process. Exploration and examination are key to excavate the dynamics of those experiences: to delve into living and complex social processes, circulate among its elements, feel the relations between them, go through its different steps, discover its incongruences and tensions, come to understand these processes from their own logic, and extract lessons that can contribute to the enrichment of practice as well as theory. However, I am still trying to untangle the dialectic that underlies my double social position as a researcher from a University in the North and a member of a grassroots organization in the South.

### **Education comes from the roots up:**

From my theoretical research at the MES program I noticed many shared aims among Indigenous communities in North and South America. (Alier: 2004; Altieri & Toledo: 2011; Escobar A: 2015; Kovach: 2009; La VIA CAMPESINA 2001; Maffi: 2006; Martinez-Alier: 2004; McGregor: 2009; Montoya: 2013; Simpson: 2014; Bordirsky, M. & Johnson, J.: 2008; Smith: 2012; Tuck, E., and Yang, K.W.:2012; Wilson: 2008; among others authors). Here as well as there, nature is the source of indigenous existence, the very meaning of their life and culture. The words 'Territory' for indigenous people in Latin America, and 'Land' for First Nations people in North America, are used to describe a holistic perspective of Earth, including not only the productive functions of land but also relational dynamics such as traditional education, spirituality, ecology, time and space in each of its constituent elements—forests, water, mountains, savannas, deserts, soil and subsoil. The perspective of Biocultural Diversity helped me to explore how the interconnection of biological, cultural and linguistic elements is manifested in the community-based model of the AJBD: biocultural diversity, more than a theoretical construct, is a reality that permeates the life of local people. During the execution of



the project, the community repeatedly emphasized the urgency to recover and/or strengthen traditional education that emanates from the land. Through the information provided during the workshops, and based on some informal conversations I held with the indigenous people of the organization, I understood that for Misak people the territory goes beyond the geographical space it occupies, and includes a very diverse set of relationships through which they appropriate, use, socialize and think that space. Forms of occupation and settlement, modes of appropriation through traditional education, forms of work, authority, divisions, borders and historical sites, spirituality, beliefs, and other activities that take place on it, together constitute a vast conglomeration of social relations that configure that specific territory at a time in their history, one of the basic elements of Misak identity. They believe that the territory is not just about having access to a piece of land to work and produce, but to establish the spatial relationships that shape it as a particular territory, embedded in a specific cosmovision that allows them their continued existence as an ethnic group with its own specificities.

My theoretical construction of the territory as a holistic space might find voice in Grandma Maria Ana Calambas Morales words:

*Our territory is not just a piece of land. This is the base of our life. This is important for us because our culture arose from the mountains and lakes that surrounded us... The wisdom of our Mepik (medicine men), taught us from the beginning that our land is something very sacred, that we are part of it, that there, we have the Pishimisak or duende and other spirits of nature for whom we have to do refresco and give respect. It is said that very long ago all plants, animals and humans shared the same destiny as creatures of our Mother Earth. We have been taught that, so we don't understand why some white [western] government agencies or academic researchers come to our reservation with programs to teach us how to live in our own territory. They only talk about sustainable development but they never mention how to preserve the traditional knowledge given by our elders and ancestors<sup>95</sup>.*

Continuing with Taita Javier's story that I started in the previous *Pishinde time*, I bring another example that clearly shows that there is a vital and intimate relationship with nature, which is at the heart of a lasting journey of learning that begins at birth.

*The placenta cannot be planted anywhere, but right there next to the fire because it has to be kept warm, otherwise the mother's uterus will get cold and ill... it is from this center that our life begins to unwind, and extends in its journey across our territory. Regardless of how far away our Misak people travel from this land, they always will return to the centre because they know that their placenta is embedded there. This is how we are connected to our land from the first day of*

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<sup>95</sup> Ana Calambas, 58, Grandmother from the AJBD.

*our existence. This is how we educate our children. They know that they are inseparable from this land...*

This story could be used as a pedagogical allegory that demonstrates how education comes from the roots up. As soon as an individual is born they start to live out their existence in a spiral motion, which always come back to the centre. The planted placenta represents the most profound bond with the land and reminds Misak people of their interconnectedness with their territory. The concept of the spiral is not an abstraction for Misak people: the territory is conceived as a large snail represented in their traditional hat, which is woven in a spiral and contains their law of origin and history. Home is the starting point of that pedagogical place where oral tradition and cultural beliefs are transmitted to fortify family cohesion and cultural identity and permanence. Home is the centre from which the cycle of life of native people unfolds from birth. Elders convey that home, fire, lakes, mountains, crops, and other constituents of land are the first source of education whose pedagogy is shaped by traditional values such as love, reciprocity, respect and harmonious coexistence (exchange of solidarity among humans and non-humans).

Misak people of the AJBD acknowledge these values as pillars to their cultural identity, but are also able to recognise processes of cultural deterioration that bring imminent cultural and environmental transformations. In this regard, Floresmiro encouraged us to reflect:

Misak people of the AJBD acknowledge these values as pillars to their cultural identity, but are also able to recognise processes of cultural deterioration that bring imminent cultural and environmental transformations. In this regard, Floresmiro encouraged us to reflect:

*The loss of our traditional knowledge related to land also brings as a consequence the destruction of our culture. If we want to guarantee our cultural permanence, our identity and cosmovision as Children of the Pishimisaq or the Spirit of the Water, we must confront the new mirror of the times of conquest, which seduces us with money, markets, decadence, official education, media, politicking and religion...Being blinded and trapped by modern progress, we are becoming more individualistic in a competitive world... Our situation is critical....We have almost lost our traditional ways...This is why we urgently need to go back to our own education, we have to go to the Nachak and listen to our elders.*

He also expressed another concern of the AJBD about how the ancestral legacy of the Minga is currently at risk:

*We need to also regain our Minga because it has a lot of traditional knowledge related to our wellbeing, livelihoods and territory. A consequence of the loss of this cultural practice is the damage of community bonds and of the solidarity work that characterized our identity as Andean people long ago. This is why it is so important to return to our Minga and to live*

*as our elders used to. This is one of our big dreams, to rebuild our life project to revitalize our Mingas because only through the strength and support of all AJBD members can we improve our lives and be a light for others.*

## **Tensions**

Through the POS Learning Strategies, I developed a reading knowledge of the impact of capitalism and “modern progress” on the wellbeing of indigenous territories. And through my project I could verify the theories that supported my research framework. The testimonies given by the community revealed the contradictions they faced while living in a contemporary world that imposes on them the dilemma of being pushed to board the development train, while trying to create strategies to preserve their cultural identity. I wonder if there could be a point of convergence between the two worlds. How can we reconcile two worlds that are diametrically opposed to each other? Participatory critical examination could aid the community to disentangle the puzzle of possessing meaningful knowledge and practices to keep their cultural heritage, but at the same time being trapped by the dominant system that subjugates them and destroys their land, culture and traditional values. Although they have managed to develop livelihoods and culturally persist through traditional forms of organization and government, they are mindful of the deep transformations and negative impacts that have occurred within their community due to the multiple processes of colonization that has affected their own governability and the way they interact with the territory. The territory faces serious problems with the increasing degradation of the páramos (high altitude grasslands) and mountains (which are the sacred places of origin of the indigenous people). The preservation of the páramo has been of vital importance because of its ecological role in protecting water and because in the cosmogony of the Misak, it is the Mother. Bodies of water that spring from this point of origin (rivers, streams, lagoons) have, over the years, become polluted or have dried up. The population growth of the Misak community is perhaps one of the most serious problems that has limited the productive capacity of the territory, resulting in a scarcity of working soil area and increasing pressures on the local ecosystem. The expansion of the agricultural frontier, the inappropriate construction of new settlements in sacred areas, a boom in livestock, the burning of forests to convert them into pastures, and the use of agrochemical inputs (with consequent loss of native seeds and species), and the well-known problems of climate change have contributed to the scarcity of water and soil erosion, leading to a loss of natural wealth and strongly affecting human and environmental health. The assimilation of external models of

development is affecting the survival of the community by depleting the knowledge associated with conserving the territory and undermining social and economic welfare, which in short means a negative impact on social organization as the community is driven to ethnic disintegration.

Might the implementation of the two government funds help the AJBD not only reactivate the biocultural community based model but also trace a path to address environmental and cultural degradation issues?

One of my main concerns now is how to translate the academic report so that it will be useful to, and easily understood by, the community.

### **Questions of knowing**

The popular education research process permitted us to bring to the table the tensions and contradictions within the AJBD. Some people openly expressed their anguish of being shaped by two different worlds that made them feel contradicted all the time. They asked if wanting to strengthen their traditional education might compete with their desire to study in state universities, or if the use of technology would interfere with oral traditions. They also wondered if their dreams to protect their territory's cultural heritage, to grow their own food, to have potable water and pollutant-free soil will be possible when they are currently trapped in a system which erases their ways of living, thinking and being....How can they meet financial needs without creating a society that bases its principles of life only on economic benefits? How can they reconcile a world whose God is money with a world in which the giver of life is the spirit of the water? What is the difference between dreaming to take a vacation on Miami Beach, or buying the latest model of a Mercedes Benz, with the dream of reactivating the community-based model to redirect traditional forms of education, production and relationships with all our relations?

These questions are as yet unresolved. But the participatory process has opened a door to see how we can together re-think our ways of being. Popular Education might have served the community to listen themselves, to recognise their own knowledge and to figure out forms of resilience. Community members have suggested, and are currently working on, interesting strategies to transform weaknesses into strengths. For example, they are reviving traditional knowledge and practices through the production of audiovisual material and children ecological

theater. This endeavour is a legacy of the popular education workshops, which proposed the use of arts-based methods to empower community knowledge.

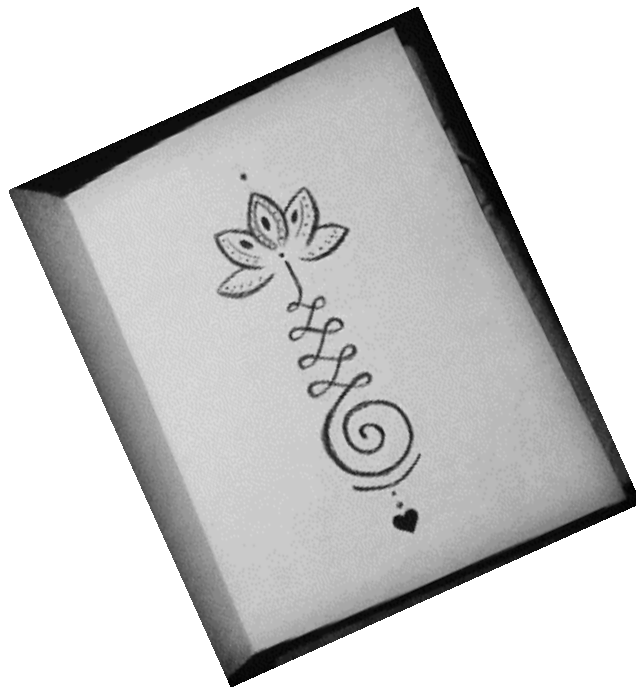
Since one of the expectations of the AJBD was to place *love* as the weaver of our process of knowing, I wonder how the community tangibly understood the idea and how academic research could include this principle. Paulo Freire often asked about our understanding of the act of teaching and learning. He believed that the question of knowing was connected with love, passion, feelings, and hopes, but emphasized that the only way to teach love is to love. As he said, “Love is the definitive transformation.” The companion species, beautifully expressed by Donna Haraway, is a meaningful reminder of our interconnectivity with life in its full expression. For me, this is a definite and structural transformation in how we relate to others.... I acknowledge the presence in my life of the many wonderful beings that have been part of this journey—people, animals, insects, waters, trees and landscapes. Now I am compelled to think that this project was possible only because of the force of the unnameable. The participatory research, the opening ceremony, the story of the placenta, the trek up the mountain, the farewell party and the needs and hopes of the indigenous people and peasants, might all give a clue that the realization of Love for the community, more than a concept, is a vital reality to recognise the value of companionship and solidarity. The materialization of a good life could be the expression of that discredited and distorted word. The intentions of indigenous people to sacralise life should not be interpreted as ideological posture or religious belief. From decolonizing frameworks, it is the source of their Biocultural Diversity encoded in the ‘DNA’ of the struggles of people, whose motor of life is the bonds that hold them.

The Popular Education sistematizacion praxis offered an invaluable location from which I could articulate a sense of the world; a vital space for reflection to dissent, to criticize, rethink and recreate possibilities for individual and collective transformation. It made me reflect on two key questions frequently asked during my Pop-Ed class: What did you learn about the way you learn? And what would you like to change to better fit you and your values?

I learnt that the way I learn is through self-examination, curiosity, imagination, creativity, playfulness and critique. The popular educational approach led me to question the inconsistencies, limitations and biases that I had constructed under rigid parameters of learning. It made me ask: Could I challenge, for myself, unequal power relationships that I have unconsciously reproduced during my life and research journey? How many layers and eras of colonialism and oppression have we imbibed within ourselves? How many more centuries will it

take to reclaim our autonomy and our inherent right to live according to the natural wisdom and abundance of nature? Who is going to make that work for us? I would like to transform immobilizing schemes of knowledge, the rigid methods and static truths and impositions that paralyse us while dehumanizing the learning experience. Popular education encouraged me to see the world from different angles, for which uncertainty is essential to produce knowledge and transform reality. I am glad I have initiated this dialectic path to unlearn the known and to learn the unknown.

This collaborative work would definitely not have been possible without the active participation, visions, opinions, knowledge and skills of all the people who were actively part of, or supported in any way, this project. On a solidary loom of knowledge(s) we wove a masterpiece of friendship, trust and joy, filled with the unique colors of human warmth.



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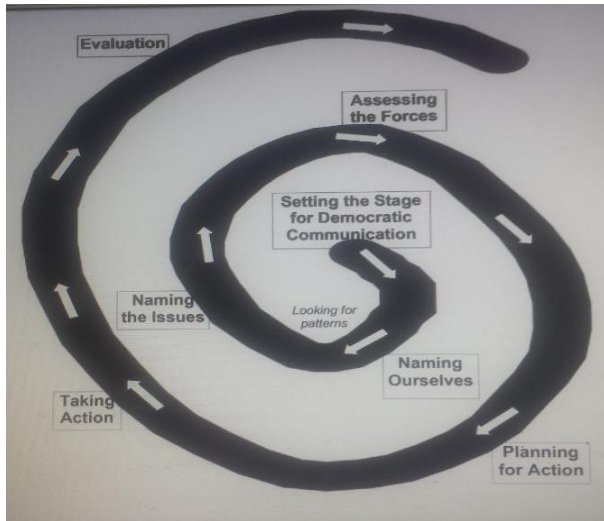
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## **Appendixes**

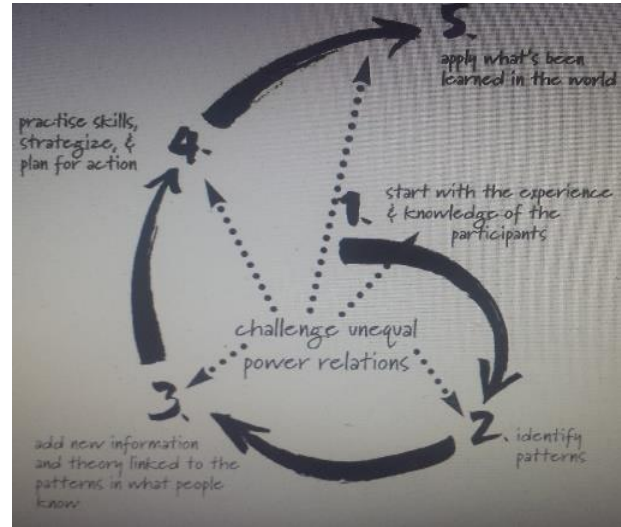
## Appendix No.1 Seven Steps of Seize the Moment: Spiral Model Version 2.

Designed by Chish Cavanagh

### Steps



### Explanation of the Process



### Step 1. Setting the Stage for Democratic Communication

**Goal:** ensure that communication needs are met for all participants, including those who can't read, write or communicate in the same ways as the majority of the population.

- What communication needs do participants and potential participants have?
- How do we understand the concept of democratic communication?
- How can we better promote broad democratic communication?

### Step 2. Naming Ourselves (who we are and what politics of change brought us into Catalyst?)

**Goal:** critically identify the make-up of the group (histories, identities, etc.) and make explicit our interests.

- Who are we? How do we define our constituency?
- Who is not present in this group and why?
- Who should be in this group and how does their absence limit us? How do we address this?
- How do we see the world & how has our view been shaped by our identity & personal history? (Race, gender, class, age, sector, religion, etc.)
- Are we of, with, or for the people most affected by the issue(s) we work on?
- What is our vision of this work?
- What do we perceive the current structure of our Country? About what it could be? About how we get there?

**Step 3. Naming the issues** (What are the political issues for which popular education is the / an answer?)

**Goal:** collectively and democratically identify key issue(s) that the group will address.

- What current issues/struggles are of most concern to group members? • What key issues/struggles does the group agree deserve attention? • What are our goals in the short-term and long-term? • What is the history of struggle on this issue (& what have been the critical moments of the past)?

- What current issue/struggle is most critical to the interests of our group? • What are the opposing interests (contradictions) around the issue? • What are we fighting for in working on this issue – in the short-term and in the long-term?

**Step 4. Assessing the forces/ Crafting meaning** (for whom? why... What do you/we need to know more about regarding political struggle/change?)

**Goal:** Identifying patterns and adding new information and theory linked to the patterns in what people know. Analyze the movements, institutions, philosophies, trends, environments, people and groups that affect the key issue(s) the group has agreed to address.

- What are the relationships of forces acting on an issue? • Who (and what) is in support/opposition of our issue? • Who's with us and against us on this issue (in economic, political, and ideological terms)? • Who (and what) is uncommitted? • What are their short-term and long-term interests? • What are the strengths and weakness of both sides? • What do we need more information about? • What's the overall balance of forces?

### **Step 5. PLANNING FOR ACTION**

**Goal:** develop & prepare actions that will promote positive change with the key issue(s)

- What do we hope to achieve and what do we have the capacity of achieving? • Whom should we be forming alliances with? • What actions should we take (who will do what and when)? • How have the forces shifted from the past to the present? • What future shifts can we anticipate? • What 'free space' do we have to move in? • How do we build on our strengths and address our weaknesses? • Whom should we be forming alliances with? In the short-term and long-term? • What actions could we take? • What are the constraints and possibilities of each?

### **Step 6. Take Action**

**Goal:** To successfully complete plan for action.

## Step 7. Evaluation

**Goal:** To collectively learn from the process and actions of STM.

- To what extent did we achieve the goal of democratic communication?
- How well did the make-up of the STM committee represent the people most affected by the key issue(s)
- How effective was the process in terms of identifying concerns, issues, forces, action-plans?
- How well did action meet the goals of the group?

## Notes on Spiral Model. Chris Cavanagh. August 16, 2010

**The Learning Spiral** is, for me, first and foremost a piece of theory. And a mighty useful piece it is. But it is still just a theory and, therefore, one of many. Calling it a "model" is useful in our educational design and facilitation/teaching work, but this is also tricky in that talk of "models" can make us forget that we're talking about a theory. And a theory, for all its power, still has a degree of conjecture in it or, to use a more plain word, guessing.

A theory is nothing more than an established (or generally accepted) explanation accounting for known facts or observable phenomena. And what we are explaining here is how people, who are subjects of history (i.e. vital, living actors who are resisting oppression and striving for a world of peace, compassion and freedom) learn this very freedom, to put it in Freirian terms. Put another way, a theory is a story about the stories we live and tell. And i love stories of all kinds, as some of you know. And i love theory. I confess that i am a real theory geek. That said, no theory is perfect and there are limits to and flaws within all theories. Thus i think humility is key in how we engage theory. A theory should be useful and allow us to journey towards our goals, objectives, dreams, whathaveyou. Many theories, at some point in their life, can become obstacles in this journey and i expect that some day our beloved Spiral model may become so. Meanwhile, it remains one of the most powerful explanatory tools we have to support an educational practice committed to human rights and responsibilities, freedom, democracy (not the naive American version but one that is critical, loving, participatory and that resists oppression in all its forms), justice and so on.

I use the spiral model a lot. At this very moment, i am working on four curricula for courses that start in September (two on popular education, one on community arts, and one on gender and power) and i am both basing these courses on the spiral model as well as including the spiral model as content in each. Over the past twenty years i have created many versions of the spiral model - so much so, that i am in danger of the very thing i am cautioning us about: forgetting that it is just a theory (i'll attach two versions that i use).

My history with the spiral model begins with my discovery of Paulo Freire's **Pedagogy of the Oppressed** in 1980. It was then that i learned about dialectical thinking as well as the so-called dialectic of action-reflection-action which Freire explains is praxis and/or a more effective means of critical thinking, i.e. we begin in "action" and then critically "reflect" on that action in order to return to "action" (presumably with increased or improved capacity). It's also important to remember that this dialectical theory (or model)

explicitly was a critique of another theory (or model) of learning- that theory that was dominant in the world that Freire studied (and that remains dominant). Freire called this the Banking Method which was a way of critiquing the dominant model (also known as the "expert-driven model" of learning). This theory explains the dominant practice of education as one that treats learners as "empty bank accounts" who then receive "deposits" of knowledge from experts; then, wealthy with this deposited knowledge, learners are prepared to go off into the world and "spend" their knowledge. The Spiral Model, as many of you know, explains that learners NEVER enter a learning process as empty vessels. Rather they are positively filled with experience and knowledge. And, therefore, as Freire suggests and as many of us have learned, a learning process should begin by acknowledging and respecting the "experience of the learners." Exactly how we do this is varied - the Spiral Model does not prescribe how we exercise this respect. And therein lies one of the things that has been a challenge for me about this approach to learning since i first encountered and embraced it. Having practiced popular education for over 30 years, "starting with the experience of the learners" remains one of greatest challenges i face. I could write a book on that so-called first step in the model. But i'll spare you for now and sign off. I really appreciate Paul's and Amy's comments and look forward to more. This is how we make theory together. This is how we make better theory. Which helps us all improve our practice. Which leads to still better theory. Hmmm, that seems rather spiral-ish....

## Appendix No.2 Tables No. 1 Design looms of Pop-Ed workshops (Spanish Version)

### TELAR. Loom Sesión 1. El Re-Encuentro! Fecha: Abril 12 (Miércoles)

Tema	OBJECTIVE	METHOD	DESCRIPTION OF PROCESS	STUFF	Tiempo (Reloj en mano)	
1. ABRIENDO EL ESCENARIO	Disponer el salón	Arreglos de sillas. Llegada de los participante	Arreglar las sillas en círculo. Colocar las Cuotas en la pared. disponer el video vim	-Agenda en el tablero. Proyector, Copia de la agenda impimida. Mesa con café y refrigerios.	9:45	15 m
	Dar la Bienvenida, Apertura de la reunión de asamblea General. agenda del día y animación	Palabras del Representante legal	Floresmiro Calambas, abrirá oficialmente la asamblea. Explicará en lengua Guambiana el motivo por el cual estamos reunidos. Se designara secretario de la reunión de para que lleve el acta del día		10:00	15 m.
		Palabras del Mayor taita Javier Calambas.	Taita Javier da la Bienvenida a la asamblea general		10:10	15 m
		Palabras de Bienvenida de Sandra León y presentación de la agenda.	Saludos. Propósito de mi Visita, (Arrancar con un poema). Hablaré del poder de la palabra en procesos de investigación comunitaria. Mencionaré también que más adelante presentaré en más detalle de que se trata mi proyecto. Haré una introducción a la agenda del día y preguntaré si hay algo más que debería ser incluido.		10:25	10m
	Conocer un poco más a cerca del grupo. Rompiendo el hielo	Busses Animacion	-Los participantes se hallan en círculo de pie El animador tiene una serie de sentencias, para que las personas se vayan agrupando de acuerdo a las siguientes características 1 Líderes de la comunidad que participaron en la recuperación de tierras 2 Líderes comunitarios: cabildantes, o de organizaciones sociales, culturales. 3 Gestores y educadores ambientales 4 Personas que no son Misak, personas que están en bachillerato 5 Personas que tienen más de 20 años. 6 Personas que se han orinado de la risa 7 Personas que son padres y madres de familia 8 Personas que tienen nietos. Personas que están en la Universidad 9 Personas que se han puesto medias cambiadas (de diferente color) 10 Personas solteras. 11 Personas que estudian 12 Personas a las que los ha pateado una vaca o un toro 13 Personas que hablan más de un idioma. Personas que tienen <u>titulo</u> universitario 14 Personas que practican la agricultura orgánica 15 Personas que no desayunaron esta mañana 16 Personas que hablan hasta por los codos 17 Personas que han tenido un amor imposible 18 Personas que tienen pena de hablar en publico 19 Personas que trabajan con niños 20 Personas que se consideran chistosas	Comunidad atenta	11:00	15 min

Setting the Stage for a Democratic Communication.	What we expect to happen. (Expectativas de la reunión) (Analizar las expectativas de los participantes sobre el taller-sesión, que se llevara a cabo)		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Se conforman 10 grupos de 6 personas Pida a los participantes que <u>traten</u> de imaginar lo que va a pasar al final de la reunión*. Traten de imagina por ejemplo esta reunión fue exitosa porque ...</li> <li>2. Se nombra un líder de grupo para que anote las expectativas de sus compañeros en un papelografo Letra Grande y legible.</li> <li>3. Se invita a un par de voluntarios para que hable sus expectativas</li> <li>4. el facilitador hace una breve reflexión de similitudes y diferencias entre las expectativas</li> </ol>	Papelografo y marcadores grueso Cinta pegante	11:15	15.m
	Crear de manera colectiva las condiciones necesarias para el proceso democrático de participación del grupo Criterios y guía para una participación democrática Drawing up Guidelines: Picturing an Ideal Learning Environment		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Se armaran grupos de 6 personas para que discutan que principios consideran importantes ( 5 min)</li> <li>2. A cada grupo se le entregan 3 tarjetas para que escriban o dibujen sus aportes y criterios. ( 5 min)</li> <li>3. Después, un representante de cada grupo a pasa y coloca una tarjeta en la pared-tablero al frente y explica en segundos porque ese criterio es importante</li> <li>4. Se hace una segunda vuelta por grupo con nuevos criterios y los que se repitan, con otros grupos se colocan al lado de estos. los más importantes</li> <li>5. El facilitador aprovecha esta actividad para la importancia de establecer criterios de convivencia, respeto....La importancia de cambiar primero nosotros para cambiar algo afuera.</li> </ol>	Tarjetas con recuadro. Marcadores	11:30	20
<b>Hasta acá 1:30</b>	<b>Descanso</b>				<b>11:50</b>	10
<b>2. NAMING OURSELVES</b> Nombrándonos a nosotros mismos  Quienes somos. Comenzar con la experiencia y conocimiento de los participantes	A. Los Asociados: Realizar dos ejercicios lúdicos para saber más a nivel individual más de cada miembro de la comunidad	-Nombre y Adjetivo Calificativo	En circulo cada persona dice su nombre y con la primera inicial de su nombre piensan en un adjetivo que describa quienes son o como se sienten Ejemplo. Me llamo Sandra y soy una Servidora, Sentidora, sembradora, sonadora, sanadora Me Llamo Ángel me siento alegre. Me llamo Carlos y me siento Contento. Me llamo José y soy Jardinero.		12:00	10
	B. La Junta Directiva: Identifica quienes conforman la Junta Directiva. Sus funciones y gestión hasta el momento.	-Exposición oral de cada miembro	Los 6 miembros de la Junta directiva deben decir su cargo y la función que desempeña. También darán un informe de quienes constituyen actualmente la organización. Quienes son los nuevos integrantes. Cuál es la Misión del Jardín Botánico. Explique cada una. Con quienes se cuenta. Quien no está Que arreglos y acuerdos se le han hecho a los estatutos, parte legal, financiera. Y proyecciones generales y el propósito. (Cada uno habla 2 minutos máx.)		12:10	15
	C. El Facilitador: Presentación de la Propuesta de Investigación MES program (alguna pregunta?) y lectura y firma de protocolos éticos	-Presentación del Mes Project	La facilitadora hará una corta presentación de Propuesta de investigación la cual incluye: Nombre del Proyecto Objetivos Metodología Estrategias Resultados de la investigación.	Power Point Video <a href="#">vím</a>	12:35	10
		-Lectura de Protocolos éticos de permiso (Consent participation)	Armar grupos de 6 personas (Se numeran del 1 al 6 y se agrupan por números) Se nombra un líder para que lea los protocolos.	Formatos impresos. Dos copias Una para adultos y otra permiso	12:45	15



			Los discuten en grupo Después se procede a firmar El líder los recoge los se los pasa al facilitador.	para niños		
	<b>Realizar Dinámica de animación</b>	Mar adentro, Mar afuera	El facilitador explica que este ejercicio ayuda a la concentración: Se forman dos filas de a 30 personas cada una. En frente de cada fila se marca una línea con cinta de enmascarar, que representa la orilla del mar. Los participantes se ponen detrás de la línea. Cuando el coordinador dé la voz de mar adentro, todos dan un salto hacia adelante sobre la raya. A la voz de mar afuera todos dan un salto hacia atrás de la raya. Debe hacerse de forma rápida, los que se equivocan salen del juego	Cinta de enmascarar en el suelo.		5 m
	D. La organización. Realizar un ejercicio grupal para hacer una identificación preliminar del nivel de conocimiento de la organización y su visión, misión y objetivos por parte de los asociados Y conocer interés personales y colectivos	Visión de Conjunto de la Organización (Overview of the Organization)	<b>Actividad. 1.</b> Se formaran 5 mesas de trabajo (Con 12 participantes c/u) Cada mesa trabajara un tema específico y nombrara a un líder que tome notas. Después cada mesa debe producir un poster con las ideas principales de la reflexión. (20 minutos de discusión y 20 presentación.(cada grupo hablar  Mesa 1. Mayores y Gestores ambientales. Reflexionaran sobre dos aspectos: Logros y Retos. Aspectos positivos y negativos. Éxitos y fracasos de la organización. Papelografo dividido en dos columnas con esos títulos Mesa 2 Mujeres Porque es importante la participación de las mujeres dentro de la organización? En un papelografo trabajaran los siguientes dos temas: Como podrían participar las mujeres y que les impide participar Mesa 3. Jóvenes Universitarios y estudiantes Cual es la relación entre Conservacion ambiental y fortalecimiento cultural?: Pensar en ejemplos concretos. Se les dará un papelografo dividido en tres. Conservacion/Relación/Cultura/Relación Mesa 4 Nuevos socios: Que saben del Jardín Botánico. Contar historias que hayan escuchado. En un papelografo de dos columnas escribirán: Lo que se y como sueno ser parte de este proyecto Mesa 5 Niños. Como se imaginan un Jardín Botánico. Dibújenlo. Socialización de resultados	Papelografo Marcadores	1:00	40 m.
	Plenaria	En círculo se dará la palabra para que los participantes resuman lo que se han comprendido hasta el momento.		1:40	15	
<b>1: 50</b>	<b>ALMUERZO</b>				1:55	60 minutos

Tema: El pasado	OBJECTIVE	METHOD	DESCRIPTION OF PROCESS	STUFF	Tiempo	
<b>3. NAMING THE ISSUES (democratically setting the agenda)</b> (What)	Fortalecer la memoria colectiva y realizar una recuperación histórica de las experiencias del pasado en San Fernando-Cooperativa y en Rio- Sucio. Proyecto Ecofondo	Socio-Drama. Improvisación teatral	Actividades 1. Sentados en círculo se jugará tingo- tango para escoger 12 asociados antiguos. Con este grupo se va a hacer a hacer dramatización donde les van a contar a los nuevos asociados que fue lo que se hizo en el pasado. Tener en cuenta lo que se hizo en San Fernando (sin financiación) Y el proyecto de Ecofondo. Lo que se aprendió de las 2 experiencias	Recurso humano, creatividad. Pelota para Jugar tingo-tango	3:00	5. min
			2. Preparación del socio drama. Los actores salen del salón		3:05	15 m
		Storytelling Te acordás cuando Animación.	3. Mientras los actores se preparan, con el resto de participantes se hace 1 una dinámicas de grupo. El facilitador explica que este ejercicio es bueno para la memoria.  En círculo de pie. Yo arranco con una pelota en la mano y digo: me acuerdo cuando: "por primera vez vi una Bromelia" luego se la tiro a otra persona y le digo: Floresmiro te acordás cuándo? Y el responde: me acuerdo cuando ...y se la tira a otro del círculo y por su nombre le dice: "Albeiro te acordás cuando, esta responde y así sucesivamente ....	Pelota	3:20	15 min
			4. Presentación del Socio-Drama	Talento y Creatividad humana	3,35	10 m
	fortalecer la memoria y la expresión oral espontánea a través del recuerdo del pasado	Mesas de trabajo	5. Crear Grupos de reflexión: <b>Grupo 1:</b> Dividirá en dos mesas conformadas con los nuevos socios -Cada mesa dibujara lo que comprendieron del melodrama. <b>Grupo 2</b> Se armaran 3 equipos de trabajo conformados por los socios antiguos. -Cada equipo va a trabajar dos carteleras con tres columnas con la siguiente información de la experiencia del pasado. (Considerar análisis educativo, cultural, ambiental, social y político a. Lo que más le gusto. Porque? Algo que aprendió b. Lo que no le gusto. Porque? Como se podría mejorar.	Cartulinas y colores	3,45	15. min
			-Se nombraran dos líderes del grupo 1 para que compartan sus dibujos y reflexiones con los demás participantes.		4:00	10 min
			Se nombrara dos representantes grupo 2 por cada mesa para que socialicen los resultados (5 min x mesa)	Papelografos y marcadores	4,10	15 min
<b>1;10</b>			<b>Descanso</b>			15 m

	Revisar el Diseño original, Metas y Objetivos del Modelo Osik Waramik Purek Escuela Viva de la Naturaleza Y el Proyecto financiado por Ecofondo para recordar la historia del Jardín Botánico y darle valor a las experiencias y aprendizajes del pasado	Power point	Presentación en power point del modelo Osik Waramik Purek Tapshik			10 m
		Foto- Historias Y o video JBD	Presentación de un seriado de fotografías seleccionadas de acuerdo a las áreas del Jardín Botánico que dé cuenta del proceso del pasado (Proyecto Financiado por Ecofondo)	Proyector Computador O Video <del>sin</del>		10 min
	Identificar la situación política que paralizó el proceso del Jardín Botánico y el actual momento o postconflicto	Reporte Político del Clima Political Weather Report	<p>Se conformaran 4 mesas de trabajo y cada mesa trabajar un tema específico preguntas para realizar un análisis de la problemática a nivel Local regional, nacional e Internacional. Mirar ejemplos concretos</p> <p>Mesa 1. ¿Qué efectos tienen los conflictos armados en procesos de Fortalecimiento Cultural y Conservación ambiental?</p> <p>Mesa 2 ¿Cómo fue y/o ha sido impactada la organización por la situación de orden público en la región?</p> <p>Mesa 3. Cuál es la actual terreno político de Colombia? En que se ha transformado la situación del pasado? Avances del proceso de paz. Riesgos y debilidades del proceso.</p> <p>Mesa 4. Con que oportunidades de mejoramiento de calidad de vida cuentan las comunidades locales en el post conflicto? Que oportunidades para el medio ambiente? Riesgos, debilidades y oportunidades</p> <p>1) Dibuje una línea por la mitad del papel, marque un lado positivo y un lado negativo.</p> <p>2) Dibuje cuatro círculos en la hoja de papel, cada uno alrededor y más grande que el otro.</p> <p>3) Etiquetar el círculo más pequeño, interno "local", luego regional, "nacional" en el siguiente círculo y "global" x fuera del 4. círculo</p> <p>4) Afirmar que las condiciones globales, económicas, políticas, sociales, culturales, tecnológicas, etc. Del mundo están cambiando constantemente. Muchas cosas tienen impactos en todos los niveles de nuestra vida.</p> <p>5) Explique "Vamos a ver el panorama general; Un informe meteorológico político es una forma de compartir lo que sabemos y hacer algunas conexiones entre nuestras comunidades locales y los cambios que ocurren en todo el mundo. Lo llamamos un "informe meteorológico político" porque se asemeja los diagramas de clima que vemos en las noticias y, como el clima, podemos usar esto para ver en qué clima estamos y qué está dirigiendo nuestro camino. "</p> <p>6) Presentar la tabla del informe meteorológico político con los círculos locales, nacionales y globales y lado positivo y negativo.</p> <p>7) Explique qué vamos a publicar eventos y tendencias que afectan la</p>	Una gran hoja de papel (pesada, tamaño póster) Cinta adhesiva Al menos doce marcadores Al menos cincuenta notas adhesivas o tarjetas de referencia con cinta adhesiva		45

			<p>seguridad humana que conocemos y estamos experimentando</p> <p>8) Se organizan en grupos y se pide a los participantes que "piensen y listen la seguridad humana y listen los eventos, tendencias (positiva y negativa - una por nota adhesiva)</p> <p>9) Modela esto: para cada evento, haga un enlace a otro círculo (por ejemplo, si escribe acerca de un evento local, "Perdió un empleo", luego preguntar cuál es el vínculo en los círculos nacionales y globales). Puede haber más de un enlace No importa en qué círculo empieces.</p> <p>10) Los grupos publiquen todas sus notas adhesivas y pida a cada grupo que denuncien una cosa (Mostrando los enlaces)</p>			
<b>Evaluación y Cierre</b>	Realizar un Conversatorio sobre las experiencias aprendidas y Hacer la evaluación de la Jornada del día.	Narración de historias Conversatorio. Plenaria	<p>Abrió un círculo de conversación como una oportunidad para algunos de los jóvenes y los gestores ambientales hablen de como el haber participado en el jardín botánico los transformo. (En la obra de teatro de los niños y en el proceso de capacitación y educación ambiental) Invitar voluntarios a contar sus historias</p> <p>Comentarios finales y conclusiones de la experiencia aprendidas en el pasado y Evaluación de la sesión del día.</p>		6:05	30
		Evaluación escrita. (Estructurada Criticism)	Se le dará a cada participante una hoja de evaluación de la actividad para que la complete de forma individual, ( desarrollar esta evaluación)	Fotocopias de evaluación esferos	6:35	15
	Cerrar el día con alegría pasa bocas y, música,		Invitar a los asociados a compartir sentimientos, emociones y socializar libremente.	Pasa bocas, Música, grabadora o equipo de sonido	6: 50	60
<b>1:40</b>						

⊕ **TELAR. Loom. Sesión 2. Fecha: Jueves 13 de Abril**

Tema: El presente	OBJECTIVE	METHOD	DESCRIPTION OF PROCESS	STUFF	Tiempo	
<b>Apertura del segundo Día del taller</b>	Disponer el salón	Arreglos de sillas. Llegada de los participante	Arreglar las sillas en círculo. disponer el video vim	-Agenda en el tablero. Proyector, - Mesa con refrigerios	9:45	15 m
	Presentar la agenda del día.	Verbal	La facilitadora da la bienvenida al segundo día del taller y lee la agenda del día. Empieza por hacer un pequeño resumen resaltando los principales puntos de la actividad del día anterior. Comenta que la agenda estará colgada a la entrada del salón. El Asistente reparten copia a c/u de los asistentes Recuerda seguir la guía y principios para un ambiente de participación democrática, establecidos el día anterior	Copia de la agenda impresa	10:00	10
	Realizar un ejercicio grupal de Calentamiento	Sacudir, desperezar, caminar y saludar y conectar	El facilitador va dando las siguientes instrucciones: -En Círculo de pie cada uno comienza a mover lentamente el cuerpo, de los pies a la cabeza. -Cuando llegue a la cabeza quedarse quieto y hacer muecas con la cara mirando a los compañeros -Después comenzar a caminar por el salón bien despacio mirando hacia el piso como si buscara algo en el suelo -Luego comienzan a caminar rápidamente mirando hacia el frente. -Normalizan el paso y miran a los ojos a los ojos compañeros con los que se cruzan. -Luego dan la mano a cada persona con la que se encuentran. y les dice hola. Vuelven a sus sitios.	Cuerpos presentes	10:10	5
<b>CRAFTING MEANING / ASSESSING THE FORCES</b> Identifying patterns and adding new information and theory linked to the patterns in what people know.	Teniendo en cuenta la actividad del día anterior Weather Report, se realizará un diagnóstico colectivo de la situación de actual del Jardín botánico las Delicias e identifiquen cuáles son los mayores problemas o limitaciones, sus causas y consecuencias	Árbol de Problemas	Cuáles problemas son los problemas más críticos de la organización actualmente? Mencione por lo menos 3 teniendo en cuenta factores culturales, educativos, ambientales y económicos - Se dividirá el grupo en mujeres y hombres y se conforman dos mesas de trabajo para analizar el mismo problema desde la perspectiva de género. Mujeres tarjetas color morado. Hombres color azul -Cada grupo analizara hará una lluvia de ideas de la problemática del jardín Botánico. (5 min). Se nombra un líder de grupo para que escriba las ideas. -Después se enfocaran en discutir 3 problemas prioritarios y discutirán las causas y los efectos (15m) -Cada grupo escribirá los 3 problemas identificados con sus respectivas causas y efectos. () (5min) -Se nombran 3 representantes de cada grupo. -Cada representante presentará un Problema con sus causas y efectos. Se van colocando las tarjetas en los lugares indicados: Problemas: Tronco, Causas: raíces, efectos: Ramas) Se intercalan en la presentación. Una vez habla una mujer, después un hombre (18 m. 3 x c/u)		10:55	45

	Evaluar los resultados del Árbol de problemas	Visualización y análisis oral.	De acuerdo a lo expuesto en el árbol de problemas, el facilitador guiará al grupo a evaluar los resultados del árbol de problemas para identificar patrones, (coincidencias y diferencias) en un <u>papelografo</u> dividido en 2 columnas.	papelografo Marcadores Cinta	11:40	20 m
<b>1 h 20</b>	<b>DESCANSO 1. (Café y Baño )</b>				<b>12:00</b>	<b>10m</b>
	Realzar un ejercicio de concentración	Parejas	Todos los participantes deben estar en constante movimiento el facilitador, en cualquier momento decidirá y gritará el número de parejas que se deben formar: 1 pareja, 2 parejas, 3 parejas... Y todo aquel que se quede sin pareja queda va saliendo del juego	Cuerpos atentos	12:10	5
	Buscar posibles soluciones a los problemas identificados en el árbol de problemas	Bosque de posibilidades	El facilitador hará una introducción a esta actividad mencionando como cada problema tiene múltiples formas de abordarse y por tanto varias posibilidad de solución. (2 m) Se juntaran los mismos grupos de la actividad anterior (hombres y mujeres separados) y pensarán y analizarán 3 posibles soluciones para cada uno los problemas identificados anteriormente. (15) En tarjetas colores escribirán por separado el título de cada problema en colores morado (mujeres) y azul.(hombres) (3) Después, escribirán cada solución usando una tarjeta de color diferente: S1 Verde. S2 Rosado. S3. Amarillo. (3) Cada grupo debe dibujar y recortar en 3 papelografos la silueta de tres árboles En cada árbol adicionaran las tarjetas en orden; Título (problema) y sus 3 soluciones hasta terminar de armar sus respectivos bosques (3 árboles x cada grupo) Se nombran 3 representantes de cada grupo para que cada uno socialice los resultados de cada árbol. (18-20 m. 3 x árbol)	Tarjetones de Colores Marcadores Papelografo Tijeras Cinta	12:15	45 m
	Discutir que comprenden los participantes por "reactivar la organización" Y porque sería importante hacerlo. Y fortalecer la escritura espontánea		A nivel individual cada persona debe escribir completar las siguientes sugerencias: (10)  La reactivación del Jardín Botánico me ayudaría a..... La reactivación del Jardín Botánico ayudaría a la comunidad a..... Por tanto es muy importante reactivar el Jardín Botánico porque.... de porque es importante la reactivación del Jardín Botánico. Para la organización y su comunidad Se abrirá un espacio para que las personas que lo deseen compartan de forma verbal sus pensamientos (5 ) Se recogerán las opiniones escritas de los participantes En un papelografo el facilitador se resumirán los puntos principales del ejercicio (5 m)	Papel con títulos prediseñado y esfero	12:50	20
<b>1 h 10 m</b>	<b>ALMUERZO</b>				<b>1:15</b>	<b>60</b>

Tema: El presente	OBJECTIVE	METHOD	DESCRIPTION OF PROCESS	STUFF	Tiempo	
	Fortalecer la creatividad a través de la expresión oral	Inventando Historias en pares	Los participantes se juntan en pares. Una de las dos personas comienza una sentencia corta y la otra persona debe continuar hasta que conjuntamente creen una historia. Lo deben hacer de forma dinámica hasta que cada uno haya dicho 5 sentencias Ejemplo: P1: Las vacas comen pasto. P2: y además les gusta el agua del estanque. P1. Pero el problema es que esa agua está sucia, P2. Por eso se están enfermado las vacas de la vereda de san Fernando. P1. Si, y además ya no producen buena leche. P2. Mi papa me dijo que a las vacas también las fumigan. P1. O sea que además de que toman agua sucia, su carne esta envenenada? P2. Pues parece que si... P1. Yo creo que debemos hacer algo... P2. Sera no tener más vacas (10 mín. historia) Se preguntara a los participantes como les pareció el ejercicio y se invita a que algunos compartan sus historias (3 0 4 grupos máx.) 10 min	Creatividad, imaginación	2:15	15
	Observación preliminar del territorio	Caminata Para aproximarse al lugar con todos los sentidos.	Se conforman grupos de a 3 personas y cada trio escogerá un lugar al aire libre cercano, recorrerán el lugar y trataran de aproximarse al lugar a través de todos sus sentidos (olfato, oído, tacto, vista) de hallar interrelaciones entre Temperatura o clima, viento, sol, agua, vegetación etc.) por 15 minutos, luego comparten con sus compañero. (15. 5x c/u) Y finalmente harán un dibujo de cómo percibieron el lugar (10) Después se solicitan algunos voluntarios para compartir sus experiencias (15)	Sentidos Papel y lápiz y colores	2:35	45
1 h.			<b>Descanso</b>		3:10	10
<b>Planning For Action</b>	Desarrollar las habilidades de escritura	Free Writing	Cada persona deberá escribir de forma libre por 5 minutos sin parar	Papel y lápiz	3:20	5
	Adicionar nueva información Ubicar a la organización y el proceso de su reactivación en el contexto de sus respectivas comunidades.  Pregunta guía: ¿Cuales son los problemas prioritarios del lugar donde usted vive? (Estos problemas deben haber sido deliberados en el Political Weather Report)	World Café	Se conformaran 6 mesas de trabajo con las parejas y a cada una se le asignara un tema de análisis e identificar elementos positivos y negativos de cada tema. (20 min) Y cuáles serían las acciones para cada problema. <b>ACTION!!!</b> <b>Guambia:</b> Mesa 1. Problemas sociales Mesa 2. Recuperación Cultural Mesa 3 Sistema de educación. Mesa 4. Manejo ambiental del territorio Mesa 5. Formas de sustento y modelo agrícola Anotaran sus en dos casilla +/- <b>Rio-Sucio:</b> Mesa 6. ¿Cómo está la situación en la vereda? Educación, población, restitución de tierras, recursos naturales, necesidades básicas (acueducto, electricidad). Anotarán sus conclusiones en una matriz: Vertical: Cada uno de los tópicos. Horizontal: +/- 2. Luego se juntaran las mesas así: Grupo 1: (mesas 1, 2,3) Grupo 2: (mesas 4,5,6) quienes compartirán sus resultados con los nuevos miembros. (15 min. 5x c/u) 3. Se nombra un líder de cada mesa para que presenten los resultados (10 m).	Carteles Marcadores Cinta	3:25	60

	Realizar una Reflexión de las actividades relacionadas con la identificación de problemas en el presente, adicionando nueva información.	Reflexión del facilitador	El facilitador hace un reflexión de lo expuesto por los grupos mencionando que puesto que ya se han identificado los mayores problemas tanto a nivel de la organización y en las respectivas comunidades de los asociados es importante pensar en los mecanismos como el Jardín proyectará sus labores (ACCION) en Guambia y en Rio-Sucio. Dice que más adelante en la parte de planeación del futuro, se debe retomar que planes o iniciativas hay previstas para cada lugar...	Papelgrafo Marcadores	4:25	10
	Realizar las críticas, evaluación y conclusiones del taller	Cerrando el Redondeo Conversatorio	1. Circulo de Conversación (Plenaria)	Papel y lápiz. Fotocopias de	4:35	30
			Cuestionarios	Evaluación	5:05	15
<b>2 h</b>			Criticas Estructuradas o Corazón (Como se sintieron) Cabezas (Nuevas Ideas) y Manos (Acción. Lo que se podría cambiar) Pedirle a Chish un diseño de esta evaluación		5:20	10
	Cerrar el día con alegría pasa boca y, música,		Invitar a los asociados a compartir sentimientos, emociones y socializar libremente.	Pasa bocas, Música, grabadora o equipo de sonido	5:30	6:30



## TELAR. Loom. Sesión 3. Fecha: Viernes 14 de Abril

Tema: Futuro	OBJECTIVE	METHOD	DESCRIPTION OF PROCESS	STUFF	Tiempo	
Apertura del tercer día del taller	Disponer el salón	Arreglos de sillas. Llegada de los participante	Arreglar las sillas en círculo. disponer el video vim	-Agenda en el tablero. Proyector, - Mesa con refrigerios	9:45	15 m
	Presentar la agenda del día.	Verbal	La facilitadora da la bienvenida al TERCER día del taller y lee la agenda del día. Empieza por hacer un pequeño resumen resaltando los principales puntos de la actividad del día anterior. Y Comenta que la sesión en la sesión del día nos enfocaremos en planeación para el futuro. Comenta que la agenda estará colgada a la entrada del salón. El Asistente reparten copia a c/u de los asistentes Recuerda seguir la guía y principios para un ambiente de participación democrática, establecidos el primer día.	Copia de la agenda impimida	10:00	10
<b>PLANNING FOR ACTION</b>  Realizar un plan estratégico en el presente que nos permita trazar estrategias de acción a corto, mediano y largo plazo.	Realizar una dinámica de integración para reconocer los potenciales de los participantes y armar grupos de afinidades para la planeación para la acción	Baile de afinidades	El facilitador introduce esta actividad diciendo que de aquí en adelante la sesión se enfocara en identificar el recurso humano, y los diferentes planes y proyectos para hacer viable el proceso de reactivación. Para ello comenzaremos bailando... si señoras y señores Vamos a bailar ☺ Se les pregunta a los participantes que es lo que más les gusta del trabajo o estudio que realizan. -En el papel cada uno escribe su nombre y la respuesta a la pregunta que se dio y se prende en el pecho -Se pone la música y al ritmo o de ésta se baila, dando tiempo para ir encontrando compañeros que tengan respuestas similares. -Conforme se van encontrando compañeros con respuestas afines se van cogiendo del brazo y se continúa bailando y buscando nuevos compañeros que se integran al grupo -Una vez que se hayan conformado los grupos de afinidades, se para la música. -Se da un corto tiempo para que intercambien ideas y compartan entre sí el porqué de la respuesta de sus tarjetas; -Luego el grupo expone al plenario en base a qué afinidad se conformó, cuál es la idea del grupo sobre el tema, (por ejemplo, porqué eso es lo que más les gusta de su trabajo, etc.)	Carteles de colores, marcadores y cinta	10:10	15
	Identificar y realizar un inventario de habilidades y capacidades a nivel educativo, ambiental, investigativo, cultural y organizacional con el que se cuenta. Identificar otros recursos: operativos, financieros etc.	Inventario Grupal	Con que recursos contamos...(20 m) 1. Recurso Humano: Los grupos afines identificados en la dinámica anterior, se dividirán en mesas de trabajo y harán un inventario del recurso humano. Papelegrafo dividido en 4 columnas que contendrá la siguiente información: Nombre, Oficio, habilidades, áreas de interés. 2. Otros Recursos. Se hará un listado de otros recursos. Por ej. Tierra, herramientas, equipos, fondos, contactos etc. Se pegaran las carteleras al frente del salón y un representante de cada grupo pasa y hace un resumen del inventario de su mesa. (10 m) El facilitador resaltara sobre el gran potencial de la organización, y hará una	Carteles Marcadores Cinta	10:25	35

			mención sobre como nuestras experiencia personales, conocimientos y habilidades cuentan y son nuestro primer recurso y fortaleza. Y también la valoración de la Reserva-predio del Jardín Botánico, la Casa por terminar en San Fernando (5 min)			
	Realizar un primer borrador de los sueños, ideas, iniciativas planes, y proyectos comunitarios para la reactivación del JBD  (First Draft of community plans based on Dreams and desires)	Huevos Soñados de Colores	¿Para dónde vamos? Nuestros sueños, un punto de partida y punto de llegada  A cada persona se le da un huevo-cofre de un color diferente (cada huevo contiene adentro una sorpresa: chocolate y una frase inspiradora) (2 min) Se buscan los colores de los huevos y se conforman 6 grupos de trabajo (3m) Se invita a que cada persona abra su huevo, lea en silencio su frase. (1m) Después se llevan el chocolate a la boca y sin morderlo, saboreándolo, cierre los ojos y visualicen sus sueños como miembros del Jardín Botánico (3 min) Abren sus ojos y comparten sus sueños con el resto de integrantes de su grupo. Se nombra un líder para vaya escribiendo los sueños de sus compañeros (20 min) Se nombra una persona para que comparta los resultados ante la plenaria 18 min (3x2/g) Comparten sus carteles de colores. Cada grupo escribirá sus sueños en un cartel del color de su huevo.	Huevos de colores, Pensamientos frases inspiradoras Chocolates Papelografo Marcadores Cinta	11:00	45
<b>1h 45</b>			Descanso		11:45	15
	Realizar una actividad de como vemos a nuestra organización en el futuro Identificar que y/o cuales son los sueños y estrategias de acción podemos implementar para alcanzar nuestros propósitos.	Mural Movable (Puede ser interpretado como un Mapa Parlante de posibilidades para la acción)	Se elaborara un mural colectivo donde todos dibujaran, escribirán, rallaran, y expresaran de una forma artística como podríamos ir dándole forma a nuestros sueños y como ven la organización en el futuro Se diseñará como un rompecabezas con el perfil de una montaña. Se corta en 4 partes: (Cada parte será trabajada separadamente por un grupo) bajo los siguientes temas:  1 Sueños. Se dibujaran paisajes, símbolos, figuras, y se recortaran imágenes de revista y se hará usos de las manualidades para ilustrar los sueños. Como nos imaginamos nuestro JB 2. Acción: incluir símbolos, letras pensamientos, ideas, frases, graficas, poemas, para identificar posibilidades de acción. 3. Sueños que requieren financiamiento y Cuales se pueden ir configurando de manera autosuficiente) 4 Con quienes podemos establecer alianzas y de qué manera? Identificar potenciales aliados. Sugerencias sobre que alianzas estratégicas, propósitos, forma de concretarlas.*El facilitador llevara una lista con sus propias sugerencias, y las compartirá con el grupo una vez ellos hayan hablado	Papel gigante Marcadores, Crayones, Acuarelas, Semillas, Plumas, Cortezas, Palitos, y revistas y magazines	12:00	60
<b>1 h</b>			Almuerzo		1:00	60

<b>Take Action</b>	<p>Comenzar a establecer compromisos individuales de la forma como participaran de la reactivación de la organización</p> <p>(Definir roles y grupos visibles de acción. Con que y cómo se cuenta con cada persona?)</p>	<p>Ofrenda (Gift offering)</p>	<p>Se inicia con una reflexión sobre la importancia del compromiso y el dar y recibir La reciprocidad Andina. Recuperar el Sentido de la Minga. . Como y de qué manera nos comprometemos a nivel individual por el bien colectivo.</p> <p>Se numeran de uno a 6 y se arman 6 grupos de a 10 personas. A cada persona se le entrega una hoja de colores doblada en dos por la mitad En la portada la persona escribe su nombre y un dibujo o algo representativo. En una de las hojas de adentro del lado izquierdo escriben el título "Mis talentos" y al lado derecho "lo que le regalo al grupo" en la contratapa "lo que el grupo me regala .La contratapa la llenan los compañeros quienes empiezan intercambiar sus "libritos de unas y otros, escribiendo, dibujando, dejando mensajes. Una vez que los libritos de todos quedan completados, cada uno pasa el suyo y lo lee otro compañero para el resto.</p>	<p>Cuestionarios Bolígrafos</p>	<p>2:00</p>	<p>20</p>
		<p>Carta o Cuestionario (ask Chris) Como me comprometo?</p>	<p>Los participantes llenaran un formato donde indicara, el área del Jardín a la que le gustaría apoyar, de qué forma lo haría y el tiempo que puede invertir. Cada uno se compromete a empezar a elaborar una carta de compromiso donde manifiesta la forma como se involucraran activamente en la reactivación del Jardín Botánico. Esta Carta debe ser traída en la última sesión de cierre y despedida en Mayo 27 (x definir con la comunidad.)</p>		<p>2:20</p>	<p>15</p>
	<p>Reconociendo los valores de los otros. Lo que vi en ellos durante los días del taller</p>	<p>La telaraña (la web: Tejiendo vamos reconociendo los valores del otro</p>	<p>Los participantes se colocan sentados formando un círculo y se le entrega a uno de ellos la bola de cordel; el cual tiene que tirar el ovillo a otra persona mientras dice su nombre y una cualidad. Por ejemplo: "Envío el ovillo a Anselmo porque me gusta su disposición para ayudar", "Mando la pelota a Luz Marina porque me gusta su forma de hablar, es muy amable", "Va para Carlos, me gusta porque sabe hacer reír a los demás", "Envío el ovillo a Sara porque me gusta cómo canta". Es importante decir el nombre del destinatario y la fórmula "me gusta" para hacer el mensaje personal y eficaz. Unas veces todas tengan un cabo de cuerda en sus manos, se hará el mismo procedimiento a la inversa (deshacer la telaraña): El último dirigirá el ovillo a quien se lo mandó, diciendo su nombre y algo positivo de él. Así, todos recibirán, al menos, dos valoraciones buenas al finalizar la dinámica. No pasa nada si se repite el mismo rasgo positivo en dos o más personas. Pero intentaremos que las características destacadas de los demás no sean meros rasgos físicos como la ropa o el peinado. Sin embargo, cuando haya algún miembro que asista por primera vez, podremos hablar de sus ojos, su sonrisa o su gusto para elegir la ropa, pero sin caer en la superficialidad.</p> <p><b>Reflexión facilitador:</b> Como hemos visto, cada uno tiene unos dones. Es bueno reconocer los talentos de los demás y verbalizarlo (lo bueno hay que decirlo). Algunos tendremos más cosas en común que otros, pero lo que está claro es que todos somos importantes y necesarios. Nos complementamos. Vamos a tejer posibilidades Juntos)</p> <p>Se usa la metáfora del tejido para realizar una reflexión posterior del tejido social como mecanismo participativo transformador</p>	<p>Ovillo de lana</p>	<p>2:35</p>	<p>20</p>
	<p>Realizar las críticas, evaluación y conclusiones del taller</p>	<p>Cerrando el Redondeo Conversatorio</p>	<p>1. Conversación Final</p>		<p>2:55</p>	<p>30</p>
			<p>2. Críticas Estructuradas.</p>	<p>Papel y lápiz.</p>	<p>3:30</p>	<p>10</p>
<p><b>1 h 35m</b></p>			<p><b>CIERRE Y SOCIALIZACION LIBRE</b></p>			

## Appendix No.3 Table No. 2 Community Expectations

Workshop Day 1. April 12-2017

Groups No.	Name of the Participants	Expectations Summary
<b>Group 1</b>	Freddy Wilson Calambas P. Néstor Javier Muelas Isabel Ulluné Julio Calambas Morales Víctor Daniel Muelas Iván Calambas Marino Cantero Floresmiro Calambas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Good and bad experiences</li> <li>➤ Reactivation with each one ideas</li> <li>➤ Believe in each person the ability to create new ideas</li> <li>➤ Believe in the ability to led the AJBD process</li> <li>➤ Solve the differences</li> <li>➤ Focus on the AJBD process and obligations</li> <li>➤ Strength our cultural values</li> <li>➤ Appropriation and responsibility</li> <li>➤ People works and learnings</li> </ul>
<b>Group 2</b>	Yoli Muelas Javier Calambas Sandra Tunubala Albeiro Morales Steven Collazos Anselmo Muelas Rosa Tenebuel Yoli Andrea Jorge Enrique Calambas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Love</li> <li>➤ Trust</li> <li>➤ Unity</li> <li>➤ Solidarity</li> <li>➤ Opportunities</li> <li>➤ Remembering (Recordatorio)</li> </ul>
<b>Group 3</b>	Edier Muelas Maria Ana Calambás Rosa Pillimue Oscar Calambás Edgar Muelas Pilelé Calambás	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Sharing lived experiences during the inactivity time</li> <li>➤ Give importance and value the meaning of these meeting spaces that allow us to strengthen organizational</li> <li>➤ Potentiate knowledge and ideas acquired</li> <li>➤ Respect, love and solidarity.</li> </ul>
<b>Group 4</b>	Dalia Andrea Calambas Cuchillo Amanda Calambas Pillimue Jazmín Cantero Diego Calambas Jesús Antonio Calambas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ To know works and experiences</li> <li>➤ Recognition of the AJBD process</li> <li>➤ Unification of the organization</li> <li>➤ Recognition of differences within the organization</li> <li>➤ Environmental awareness</li> </ul>
<b>Group 5</b>	Wimar Muelas Marcela Calambás Tunubala Lorenzo Muelas Tombé Wilson Roberto Cuchillo Lorenzo Tumiñá Hernán Darío Calambas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Generate environmental awareness to the members of the association and the community</li> <li>➤ Provide the skills and abilities of the people who is going to lead the organization.</li> <li>➤ Solidarity between the members of the association</li> <li>➤ Empower our socio- environmental organization in management of environmental projects on a local, regional, national and international level.</li> <li>➤ Guides and tools in organizational matters that allow us a good administrative exercise</li> <li>➤ Networking from virtual media</li> </ul>

Table created by Nestor Muelas and Freddy Calambas. June, 26 2017.

## Appendix No. 4 Table No. 3. AJBD's positive and negative aspects

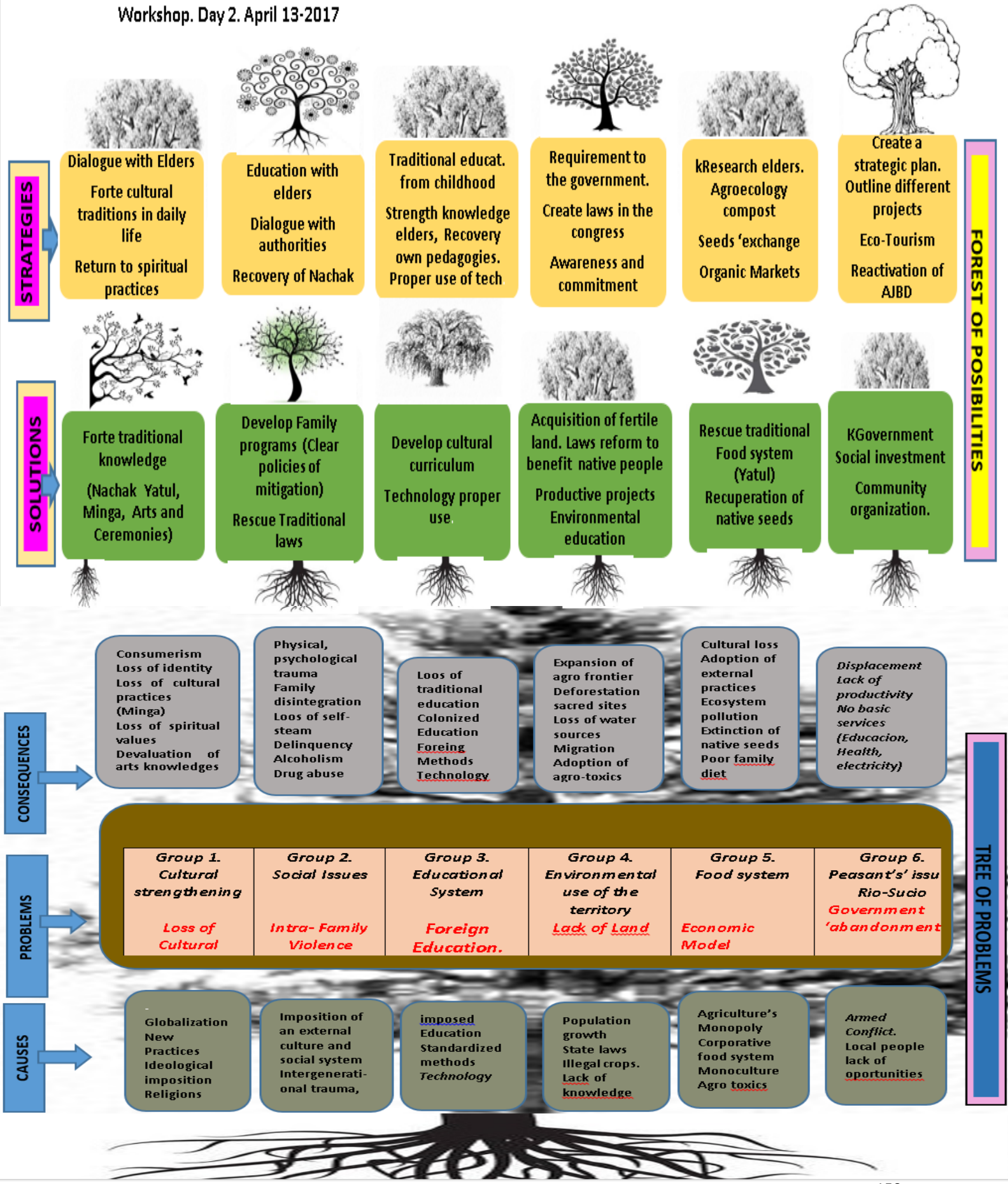
Workshop Day 2. April 13-2017

Group Categories	Positive Aspects	Negative Aspects
<b>1. Work Table</b>  <b>Elders and Environmental Facilitators</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Knowledge and lived experiences</li> <li>.-Cultural re-signification</li> <li>-Re-education related to the environment</li> <li>.-Bonds of fraternity and unity.</li> <li>-The current favorable socio-political situation of the country</li> <li>-Land ownership</li> <li>-Organization legally constituted</li> <li>-Intercultural process</li> <li>-Human talent</li> <li>.-Spirit of solidarity and collaboration</li> <li>-The reactivation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Fragility of the peace process in Colombia</li> <li>-Lack of economic al resources</li> <li>-Disinterest (Some members have no credibility to the cause)</li> <li>-Lack of sense of belonging</li> <li>.-Institutional impediments faced in the past.</li> <li>-Cultural loss due to external situations</li> <li>-Dependency on outward professionals</li> </ul>
<b>2. Work Table</b>  <b>Women</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Experiences and potential of each woman</li> <li>-Family and home values</li> <li>-Education instilled in children</li> <li>-Ideas and creativity</li> <li>-Intuitive e vision</li> <li>-Organizational skills</li> <li>-Acquired studies</li> <li>-Leadership</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Machismo</li> <li>Invisibility</li> <li>Devaluation</li> <li>Disinterest</li> <li>Fear</li> <li>Lack of self-steam</li> <li>Family responsibilities</li> <li>Beliefs</li> </ul>
<b>3. Work Table</b>  <b>Youth</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Contributions of knowledge from different professional backgrounds</li> <li>-Leadership and motivation</li> <li>-High levels of physical, mental and spiritual energy</li> <li>-Willing to learn from elders</li> <li>-Aptitude to work with Children</li> <li>-Openness to receive feedback</li> <li>-Initiative to create spaces for participation and inclusion</li> <li>-Abilities to use social media, technology and or communication tools.</li> <li>-Knowledge in organic farming</li> <li>-Innovative ideas (such as the creation of a ``Seedbed Youth Research and Management Centre``)</li> <li>-Desire to live in harmony and balance with nature</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is no environmental awareness and coherence in their actions</li> <li>. There is no inclusion of young people within the community (stigmatization)</li> <li>. Political suspicions within the community</li> <li>Loss of cultural and environmental identity</li> <li>.Mental and Physical sloth</li> <li>.Lack of autonomy and self-belief</li> <li>. The comfort zone</li> </ul>
<b>4. Work Table</b>  <b>New associates</b>	<p><b>Knowledge they had about the AJBD: (what they have heard)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Field work experiences</li> <li>-Difficulties during the establishment of the Botanical Garden</li> <li>-Political conflicts faced by the organization in its origin.</li> <li>-Children ecological theater group</li> <li>-Trips done</li> <li>-Awareness of the environmental protection</li> </ul> <p><b>Positive aspects: (Their Dreams how they hope to participate)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Ready to support in the upcoming process</li> <li>-Desire to participate</li> <li>-Willing to integrating their children in the process</li> <li>-Help with the ecological theater</li> <li>-Community solidarity</li> <li>-.Strengthen the children education at home</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-They recognized their lack of experience related to the project</li> <li>-They are concern about time interest conflicts.</li> </ul>
<b>5. Work Table</b>  <b>Children</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-They made a poster to show how they perceived the Jardín Botánico Las Delicias. They draw trees, flowers, sky, sun, rivers, birds and people planting. They said they have heard and watched a video about the work of children in the past.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Children were very shy.</li> <li>-They were afraid to speak in public.</li> </ul>

Table created by Nestor Muelas and Freddy Calambas. June, 26 2017.

Appendix No. 5. Figure No 1. A tree of problem, a Forest of solutions

Workshop. Day 2. April 13-2017



**Appendix No. 6 Table No. 4 Human talents and potentials (Inventory of skills)  
Workshop Day 3. April 14-2017**

Group Name:	Participant Names	Occupation	Estantillos (Area of interest)							Contributions to AJBD
			ADMIN	CULT F	EDU.	CONS	RES.	COM	C.DE	
<b>Spiritual Knowledge Keepers</b>	Oscar Calambás	Misak Universidad Student		X	X					Rescue of cultural practices. -Practices of community rituals and ceremonies -medicine ancestral use of medicinal plants.
	Nestor Muelas C	Fine Art Student Universidad del Cauca		X	X			X		Teaching the value of harmony between nature and humans. Ancestral practices aimed to the community good life. From arts, approaches cultural values and cosmovision (Workshops, murals, music)
<b>Literacy: Reading and Writing Facilitators</b>	Isabel Ulluné	Student Lic. Literature Universidad del Valle		X	X					-Pedagogy with children -Design of booklets - Cultural Expression of Reading-writing
	Lorenzo Muelas	Community Leader and Environmental facilitator		X		X				Negotiation management Projects 'formulation. Systematization Book design.
	Dalia Calambás	Normal School Student		X	X	X				Children games' strategies Assistant secretary Cultural expressions.
	Jorge E Calambás	Forest Engineer	X		X	X				-Project' formulation and systematization. Environmental Diagnosis Research
<b>Traditional Agriculture Rescuers</b>	Edier A Muelas	Student of agro industrial engineering Universidad del Cauca			X					Organic agriculture workshops Farming Cultural practices recovery (Yatul or family multiuse edible garden)
	Julio Calambás	Security Guard			X	X				Native seeds collection Germ-plasma bank creation
	Hernán Calambás	Farmer	X							Bank seeds administrator
	Rosa Tenebuel	Farmer	X			X				Orchid Conservation
<b>Food and kitchen Managers.</b>	Dora Lilia	Farmer and House keeper.				X				Rescue native seeds of edible plants
	Sandra Milena Tunubala	E. sistemas de la información y tecnología			X					Raising awareness about healthy eating
	Marcela Calambás	Housekeeper		X						Rescue of traditional cooking elements Recuperation of traditional children games

<b>Explorers and Researchers</b>	Floresmiro Calambás	Director AJBD			X	X		X		-Administrative support
	Anselmo Muelas	Green house administrator			X	X				Workshop in native plants germination.
	Freddy Calambás	Ecology Student. Universidad del Valle				X				Seed Collecting
	Wilmar Muelas	Economy Student Universidad Valle	X		.X				X	Financial and secretary work support
	Iván Calambás	Community leader				X		X		Trails' signaling Reforestation
	Fabio Gonzales	E. Ing. Ambiental y ecología. Universidad del Valle				X	X			-Agriculture workshops Formulation of environmental and agriculture projects. Photography.
	Yulian Calambás	High School Student. Grade 9			X					Children Ecological Theater
<b>Sharing People</b>	Jazmin Cantero	Farmer			X					Teach acquired knowledges
	Luz Marina Morales	Farmer and house keeper			X					Sharing acquired Knowledge with children and new associates
	Yuli Andrea Yalanda	Hose keeper and technology technician			X	X				Support the recovery of traditional food system
	Flor Amanda Calambás	Secretary of a Cooperative Organization				X				Children Education and Protection of the Reserve in R. Sucio.
	Lorenzo Tumiñá	Private business administrator	X					X		Collecting important information to strengthening JBD
<b>Arts and Crafts Makers</b>	Abril Calambás	High School Student Grade 9		X		X				Plants in danger of extinction Children theatre
	Benilda Tumiñá	Biology Student Universidad del Cauca				X	X			Organize and design Children Ecological Theater Botanic Assessment of Rainforest Reserve in the AJBD
	Diana Troches	Housekeeper	X	X						Logistics in Children Ecological Theater
	Diego Calambás	Estudiante		X		X				Strength traditional music
	Steven Collazos	High School Student. Grade 8.	X							Participate in children ecological theater
	Pílele Calambás	Normal Student			X	X				Traditional Arts



	Rosa Pillimue	Farmer and House keeper		X	X					Children teachings
<b>Youth Leaders</b>	Carlos Albeiro Morales	Community Leader		X	X					Share personal experiences and knowledge
	Víctor Daniel Muelas	Youth Leader			X					Charisma and confidence
	Rene Otero Chantre	Youth Leader Student of Human Sciences. Universidad del Valle						X		Professional and empiric knowledge Discipline
<b>Community Workers and Leaders</b>	Maria Ana Calambás	Participation in trainings in farmer marketing			X					Children educative process (Cultural and environmental values)
	Mariela Chantre	Farmer and community leader			X				X	Liderar procesos en la comunidad y en el Jardín Botánico.
	Javier Calambás	Empiric Historian Community leader		X	X					Workshops in collective historical memory
	Avelino Almendra	Farmer		X						Support to Traditional Medicine a
	Wilson Cuchillo	Fisherman							X	Support to Food auto sustainable processes
	José Marino Cantero	Pre-School Technician				X				Cultural pedagogical workshops Medicinal plants identification
	Alex Muelas	Fish Manager	X							Organizacional and comunication support

Created by: Freddy Calambas y Néstor Muelas

**Áreas of Interés acronyms**

<b>ADMI=</b> Administration	<b>CULF</b> Cultural Forte	<b>EDU=</b> Educacton	<b>CONS=</b> Conservation	<b>RES=</b> Research	<b>COMU=</b> Communication	<b>COM DEV</b> Desarrollo Comunitario
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**Cont. Appendix 6...**

**Community Quantitative Analysis**

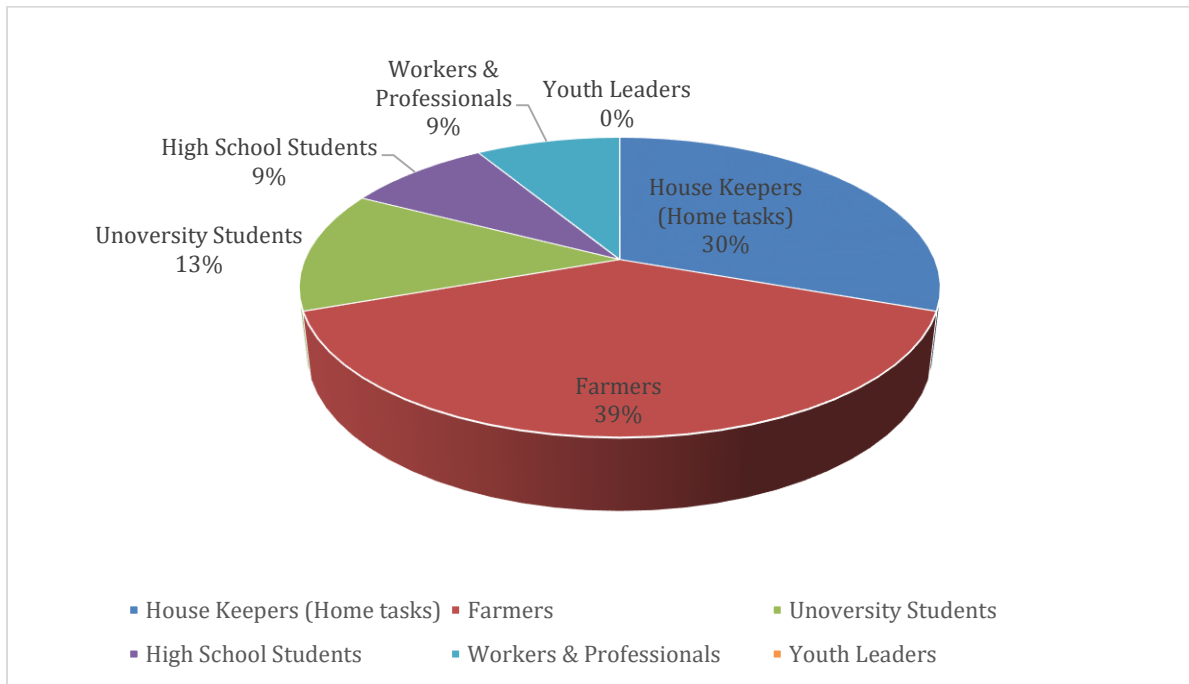
Some youth of the community created the following tables and charts based on the information of the activity human resources, areas of interest and contributions.

**Table No. 5: Occupation by Gender.**

Officious	N° of people	
	Women	Men
House Keepers (Ama de casa)	7	0
Farmers (Agricultores)	9	5
University Students (Estudiantes universitario)	3	8
High School Students (Estudiantes de bachillerato)	2	1
Workers (Profesionales & trabajadores)	2	10
Youth Leaders (Líderes de jóvenes)	0	3

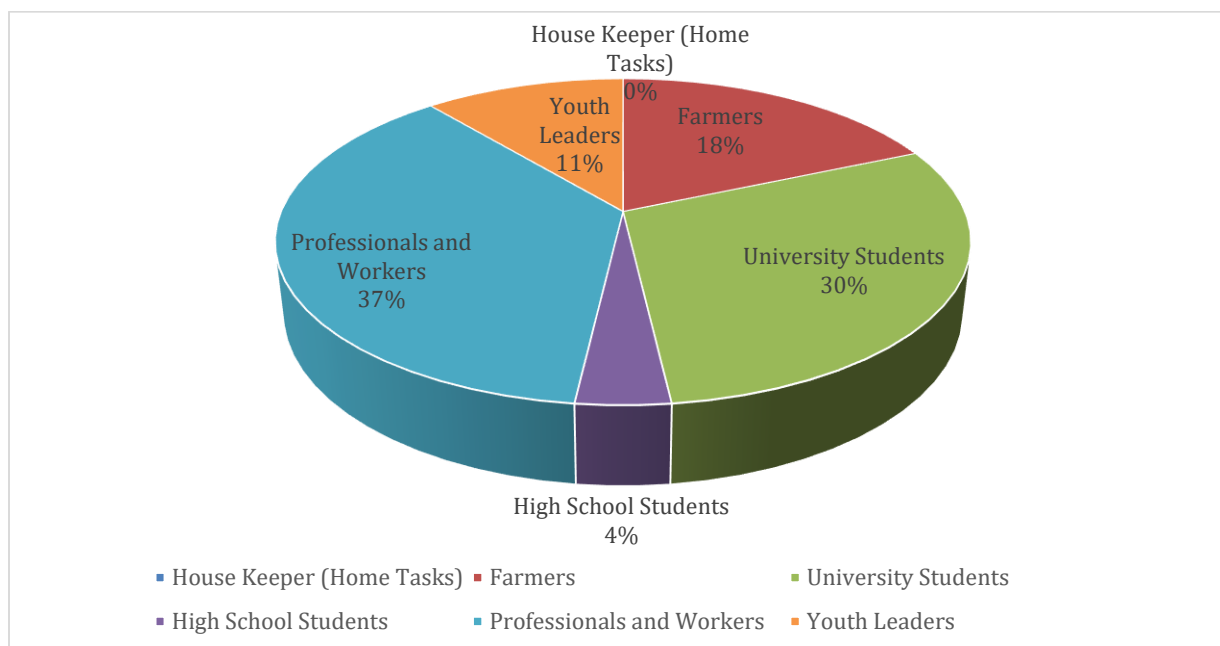
Created by: Isabel Ullune

**Figure No. 2: Women Occupations**



Created by: Wimar Muelas & Fabio González

**Figure No. 3: Men Occupations**



Created by: Wimar Muelas & Fabio Gonzalez

**Table No. 6: Areas of Interest and No of people**

Estantillos (Areas)	N° de personas
Administration	9
Cultural Forte	13
Education	24
Conservation	17
Investigation	2
Communication	6
Community Development	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>56</b>

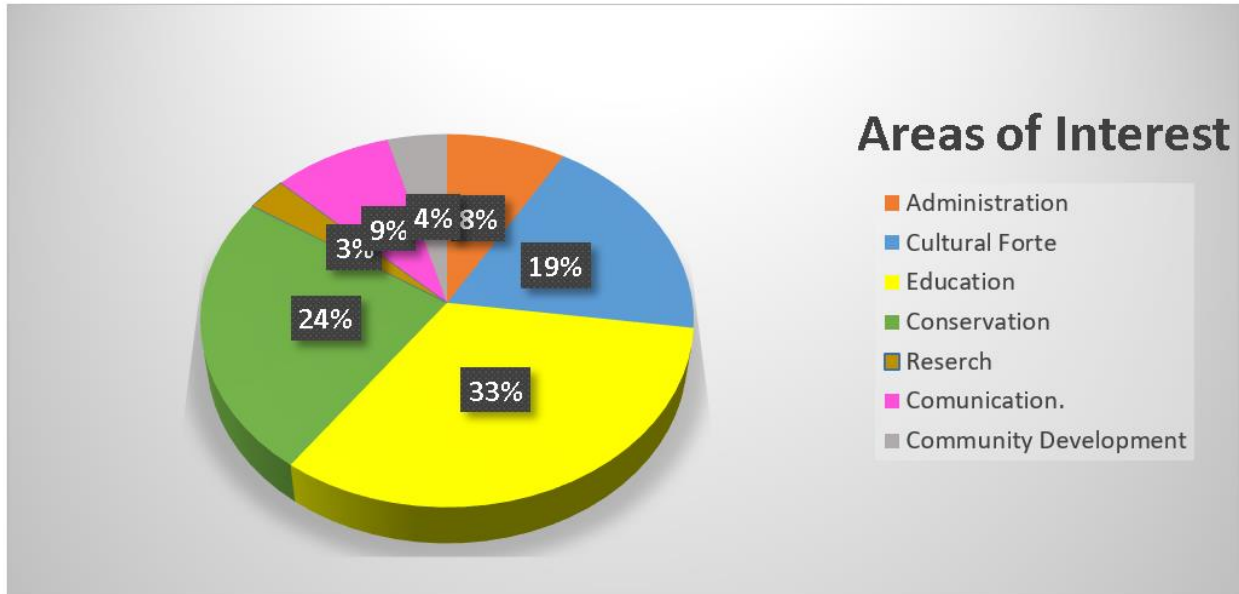
Isabel Ullune

**Table No. 7: Areas of common interest**

Estantillos	N° de personas
Fortalecimiento cultural y educación	7
Fortalecimiento cultural y conservación	4
Educación y conservación	7

Isabel Ullune

Figure No. 4: Community interests by areas



Wimar Muelas & Fabio Gonzalez

El área de más interés para la comunidad es el estantillo de educación, seguido del estantillo de conservación y de fortalecimiento cultural. El área de menos interés para la comunidad es el estantillo de investigación, seguido del estantillo de desarrollo comunitario.

**Appendix No. 7. Table No. 8:** List of Community Dreams

<b>Team Colors</b>	<b>Names</b>	<b>Dreams and Projection toward Future</b>
Orange Egg Dreamers	Javier Calambás	-Survival for the good living and re-existence of Misak people from heart
	Jazmin Cantero	-Learn English -Seeing children to be happy and expressing themselves in an artistic way
	Avelino Almendra	-Set up a laboratory to prepare traditional medications
	Luz Marina Morales	-Teach children the importance of the environment
	Leidy Pilelé Cantero	-Teach children the customs and traditions of our grandparents -Weave the strand of knowledge
	Nestor Muelas	-To establish a school of popular and cultural arts focused on the human consciousness of nature -Training in the areas of dance, music, mural painting, photography, theater, Performances and videos.
Green Egg Dreamers	Oscar Calambás	-Building the traditional House “Nuya” to strength places of ancestral practices of Misak People. -Get the spiritual guides.
	Edgar Muelas	-Create new community processes - Reactivate the JBD and be internationally recognized -Set up an environmental classroom -Became an expert in formulating projects and contributing to the JBD
	Maria Isabel Ulluné	-Creating a School -Design teaching materials for children's learning -Be an exemplary teacher and support all mothers in the process of education
	Víctor Daniel Muelas	-To create a group of young ecological entrepreneurs -Forming Life Leaders (Success happens when your dreams are bigger than your excuses)
	Hernán Dario Calambás	-Set up the trails along of our the reserve - Nursery rebuilding - Collect and preserve native seeds from the rainforest
	Wilmar Muelas	-Create a center to process natural wine and ointments based on medicinal plants
Pink Eggs Dreamers	José Marino Cantero	-Build cabins in Rio Sucio - Rebuild the herbarium in the rain-forest -Become the biologist or taxon of the Botanical garden
	Ruby Marcela Tunubalá	-Create cabins for different programs (Education, arts and others)
	María Rosa Pillimué	-Reactivate the AJBD -Having different plant species
	Dalia Andrea Calambás	-Graduating as a teacher to support children in the theater -Create a project of field trips to ancestral places. - Living well with all the beings, humans and no- humans -Conform a group of leading children
	Benilda Tumiñá	Create a data base to systematize the AJBD species
	Jorge Enrique Calambás	-Formulate and execute the architectural design of the ecological cabins within the AJBD
	Edier Muelas	Create a center for research, storage, production and processing of organic seeds
Indigo Blue Eggs Dreamers	Lorenzo Muelas	-Design booklets for children our native language “Namtrik” -Search for institutions or people interested in support the growth of AJBD -Sharing with other peoples of Colombia to raise awareness of the living environment - Look for the fabric as guardians of the earth with sisters and brothers worldwide
	Abril Jacinta Calambás	-Conserving native species that are in risk -Create pieces of tether related with the Organization projects

	Lorenzo Tumiñá	-Implement a socio-cultural and environmental development for permanence, survival and cultural growth
	Yoli Muelas	-Doing a Master that integrates Arts and Environment -Creating an Art School for Children to discover their artistic talents -Promoting environmental education through the arts and play -Strengthen the environmental Education within AJBD -Create cabins for different programs
	Daniela	-Carrying out territorial tours to raise awareness in youth to about the defense of Mother Earth -Create a project for the validation of medicinal plants and the knowledge of midwives so that this wisdom could preserved and be replicated.
	Sandra Tunubalá	-Having the Botanical Garden established back -Strengthen Environmental Education proceses
	Dora Lilia Calambás	-Get off the ground of the Botanical garden -Plant trees and arrange the orchid area
Yellow Egg Dreamers	Ivan Calambas	-Create an Ecological Radio Station -Create a workshop for the AJB trails signaling system
	Diana Trochez	-Create a group of artisans to contribute to self-sustainability
	Anselmo Muelas	-Create a bird feeder and birdwatcher
	Floresmiro Calambás	Acquisition of a lot in the municipality of Silvia for the replica of the AJBD' Nature Living school. Get a house in comodato in Popayán or Cali cities as a collection centre for handicrafts and agricultural products. Get more land in the rain forest for conservation
	Fabio González	My Dream is Called Yatul. It is related to: Food sovereignty, Community garden network, Sustainable agriculture -Seed Bank,-Organic market
	Julio Calambás	-Clean Water
	Segundo Tombé Morales	Children participation in the JBD
	Freddy Calambás	-Re-construct the path walks and nursery in the rainforest - Build a traditional house Puya-Maloka
Blue Sky Eggs Dreamers	Carlos Albeiro Morales	-AJBD become an example for other communities (alternative project)
	Flor Amanda Calambás	-Reactivate the AJBD -Creating environmental awareness
	Alex Muelas	That the JBD became a pioneer in reforestation at a local, national and international level, Doing educational activities with students
	Teresita Tombé	-Open environmental opportunities -Participate in children ecological theater -Take out the garden, -Caring for the environment -Plant trees and orchids
	Diego Calambás	-Teaching environmental and cultural messages through music
	María Ana Calambás	- Become a leader of women of the AJBD -Plant flowers in the JBD -Acquire a car to transport people to our Botanical Garden
	Rosa Elena Tenebuel	-Having clean water, clean soil Develop self-sustainable projects

Systematized by Nestor Muelas and Freddy Calambás.

## Appendix 8. Basic Information, Government Funds:

### 1. United Nations Grant (Funders Framework)

#### TERRITORIES AND AREAS CONSERVED BY INDIGENOUS PEOPLES AND LOCAL COMMUNITIES

A close association is often found between a specific indigenous people or local community and a specific territory, area, or body of natural resources. When such an association is combined with effective local governance and conservation of nature, we speak of an "ICCA". ICCA sounds like an acronym, but it is not. It is an abbreviation for "territories and areas conserved by indigenous peoples and local communities" or "territories of life".

#### ↓ Many names, a value in itself

The term "ICCA" is an abbreviation for a phenomenon that has many diverse manifestations and names in cultures and locations around the world. These include *wilayah adat*, *himas*, *agdals*, *territorios de vida*, *territorios del buen vivir*, *tagal*, *qoroq-e bumi*, *yerli qorukh*, *faritra ifempivelomana*, *qoroq*, ancestral domains, country, community conserved areas, *territorios autonomos comunitarios*, sacred natural sites, locally-managed marine areas, and many others. The ICCA abbreviation may encompass, but should never obscure, the diversity of such terms, which is a value in itself. Local / customary names should always be preferentially used, leaving the term 'ICCA' for general or inter-cultural communication...

In any case, for many custodian communities, the connection with their territories is much richer than any word or label can express. It is a bond of livelihood, energy and health. It is a source of identity and culture, autonomy and freedom. It is the connecting tie among generations, preserving memories from the past, and connecting those to the desired future. It is the ground on which communities learn, identify values and develop self-rule. For many it is also a connection between visible and invisible realities, material and spiritual wealth. With territory and nature go life, dignity and self-determination as peoples.



Source: <https://www.iccaconsortium.org/index.php/es/>

### Project Summary

Being aware of the profound transformations that traditional knowledge has suffered due to the imposition and adoption of hegemonic developmental systems detrimental to culture and land, through this fund the community wants to achieve significant changes in their current way of life. They are interested in opening spaces for self-reflection to critically examine how they have historically interacted with and managed the land within the native reservation and contribute to generating self-awareness about the urgent need to recover and strengthen cultural values, knowledge, and practices related to the environmental care. This project intends to revive the "Osik Waramik Purek Tapshik" community based-model to recover Misak cultural values as a foundation for the conservation of the territory. It was designed as an experimental model of education, research, and conservation, based on the Misak Law of Origin in order to resignify and revitalize biocultural memory and to guarantee its permanence and survival and enable the community's cultural strengthening.



Fomentado por el:  
Ministerio Federal  
de Medio Ambiente, Protección de la Naturaleza,  
Obras Públicas y Seguridad Nuclear  
en virtud de una resolución del  
Parlamento de la República Federal de Alemania



## A. AUTORRECONOCIMIENTO DE LA COMUNIDAD Y DEL TERRITORIO COMO TICCA

### 1. ¿Qué son los TICCA?

En el mundo entero se pueden identificar territorios o áreas que son **amados, manejados y conservados** gracias a las formas de vidas únicas y sabias de los pueblos indígenas y las comunidades locales. Estos territorios han recibido distintos nombres por lo que para poderse entender entre personas de diferentes partes del mundo se ha propuesto un término general, **TICCA**, que quiere decir **territorios y áreas conservados por pueblos indígenas y comunidades locales**, facilitando así que se unan y asocien para ayudar a reconocerlos y protegerlos.

Las tres características que definen un TICCA son:

- Una comunidad tiene un estrecho vínculo con su territorio.
- La comunidad tiene su propia forma de organización y unas normas para el manejo y el cuidado del territorio.
- La forma de organización y las normas han funcionado bien porque las personas pueden vivir su propia cultura, tienen medios de sustento disponibles y porque la naturaleza está conservada y se ha asegurado para las futuras generaciones.

“TICCA” es una abreviación que se refiere a:  
**Territorios Indígenas de Conservación y  
Áreas Conservadas por Pueblos Indígenas  
y Comunidades Locales**



(o “las joyas de la diversidad bio-cultural” del mundo!)





Fomentado por el:  
Ministerio Federal  
de Medio Ambiente, Protección de la Naturaleza,  
Obras Públicas y Seguridad Nuclear  
en virtud de una resolución del  
Parlamento de la República Federal de Alemania



**PROGRAMA DE PEQUEÑAS DONACIONES DEL GEF  
FORMATO PARA LA PRESENTACIÓN DE PROYECTOS**

**INICIATIVA GLOBAL DE APOYO A LOS TERRITORIOS Y AREAS  
CONSERVADAS POR COMUNIDADES LOCALES Y PUEBLOS INDÍGENAS  
-TICCA**

**PORTADA DEL PROYECTO**

**Título del Proyecto:** *Əsik Waramik Purək Tapchik: Escuela Viva de La Naturaleza para el Fortalecimiento de Nuestros Valores Culturales y la Conservación del Medio Ambiente.*

**ORGANIZACIÓN SOLICITANTE:**

/

**Organización:** *Asociación Jardín Botánico las Delicias.*

**Año de constitución:** 1999

**Número de Resolución de Personería Jurídica:** 817002749-0

**Dirección:** Vereda San Fernando. Resguardo Indígena de Guambía. Departamento del Cauca.  
Municipio de Silvia.

**Correo Electrónico:** waramik10@gmail.com

**Teléfono:** 311 373 6470 / 3116162501

**Representante legal:** Floresmiro Calambas Morales – Director General

**Persona contacto:** Yoli Janeth Muelas Calambas. Tesorera

Fecha propuesta de inicio:	Julio 5 de 2017
Duración propuesta del proyecto:	Un año

**FINANZAS:**

Total solicitado al PPD:	\$ 87.288.000
Total estimado de contrapartida:	\$ 48.030.510
Costo Total del Proyecto:	\$135.318.510

**PROPUESTA**

La propuesta no debe exceder 15 páginas. Los anexos no deben ser más de 10 páginas, y pueden incluir documentos de certificación de la organización, compromisos de financiación, cartas de apoyo, entre otros.



### ESTANTILLOS, ACTIVIDADES

EJES TEMATICOS	LINEAS DE TRABAJO	ACTIVIDADES
ESTANTILLO FORTALECIMIENTO CULTURAL	Apoyar el diálogo interno y fortalecer a las autoridades de gobierno propio	Diálogo interinstitucional para establecer convenios de colaboración mutua. Cabildo de Guambia. Asociación Jardín Botánico Las Delicias
	Apoyar ceremonias y actividades culturales para el manejo del territorio y el cuidado de la cultura	- Diálogo con sabedores y médicos tradicionales - Ceremonia de ofrendas a las lagunas - Rescate del Nachak o reuniones alrededor del fuego como forma de transmitir conocimientos - Construcción de Aula ambiental (estilo Puya) en el Jardín Botánico de Río Sucio Construcción para actividades artísticas y culturales (san Fernando-Guambia) - Creación, Montaje y presentación de obra de Teatro Ecológico Infantil con niños del resguardo de guambia (presentación en el departamento del Cauca, en Cali y Bogotá)
ESTANTILLO EDUCACION PROPIA	Mejorar la autoconciencia de la comunidad sobre la forma como ha cuidado y conservado el territorio	Talleres de concientización (cuantos) Talleres de reconocimiento de plantas medicinales (etnobotánica) Jornadas de reciclaje Producción de abonos orgánicos Implementación de parcelas agroecológicas demostrativas autosostenibles (cuantas)
	Apoyar y fortalecer formas de educación propia para la transmisión de los valores, normas, conocimientos y prácticas de manejo del territorio.	Diálogo pedagógico e investigación de campo con Taitas y mayores de muestra. Taller de reconocimiento territorial y lugares sagrados. Taller de Cartografía Social
ESTANTILLO CONSERVACION Y RESTAURACION DEL TERRITORIO	Apoyar y fortalecer procesos de restauración de la naturaleza y/o de adecuación de tecnologías traídas de afuera, en aquellos casos en los que se reconozca pérdida biológica y cultural.	Establecer convenios con universidades para iniciar un inventario de flora y fauna del resguardo de Guambia. Reconstruir el vivero y el invernadero de Río-Sucio en Inza, (cuyas dimensiones nos permitiría iniciar un proceso de propagación de especies nativas en grande que posteriormente se trasladarían al municipio de Silvia para comenzar el repoblamiento en el territorio Guambiano). Crear 1 vivero experimental al interior del resguardo, en conjunción con el comité de ambiental del cabildo - Construcción de Banco de Semillas - Propagación de especies nativas - Jornadas de arborización
ESTANTILLO COMUNICACIONES Y VAYA ALIANZAS	Desarrollar herramientas para comunicar internamente a la comunidad misma, y externamente a otras entidades e instituciones, acerca del territorio o el área conservada.	- Realización de Video-Documental del proceso - Registro Fotográfico - Diseño de Plegable Divulgativo - Organización de Mingas comunitarias de Socialización - Participación en eventos comunitarios, simposios, conversatorios
	Favorecer el establecimiento de lazos con otros TICCA de la región o del país y movilizar procesos de reconocimiento y apoyo	- Apoyo a la Comunidad Campesina de Río-Sucio Inza Cauca para que gestionen el reconocimiento de su territorio como TICCA - Intercambio de experiencias con otros TICCA del país



## 2. Colombian's Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Tourism Grant. (Funders' Framework):



### ¿PARA QUÉ FUE CREADO?

El proyecto de "*Impulso al Turismo Comunitario de Colombia*" busca apoyar iniciativas turísticas con un componente de base comunitaria, caracterizado por un turismo diferencial que involucre las comunidades en virtud de un turismo sostenible. De este modo se busca empoderar a las comunidades quienes se beneficiarán de sus propios emprendimientos, generando un mejoramiento en su condición y calidad de vida y brindando nuevas opciones de oferta turística comercializable en diversos lugares del territorio nacional.

El Postconflicto presenta grandes oportunidades y retos para las comunidades, el Turismo Comunitario representa una alternativa de desarrollo que genera beneficios económicos a las comunidades a su vez que trabaja por la preservación de los recursos naturales y valorización del patrimonio, los derechos económicos, sociales y culturales de sus habitantes.

### ¿PARA QUIÉN?

Esta convocatoria está dirigida a las comunidades que desarrollan emprendimientos turísticos. El turismo comunitario en Colombia, se desarrolla en zonas rurales y en ocasiones urbanas, posibilita la interacción de las comunidades, por lo general grupos étnicos<sup>[1]</sup> y familias campesinas, con sus visitantes, permitiéndoles ejercer un papel protagónico en su planificación y gestión, al igual que participan de la distribución de sus beneficios y/o utilidades. Esta tendencia del desarrollo turístico se caracteriza por la preservación de los recursos naturales y valorización del patrimonio, los derechos económicos, sociales y culturales de sus habitantes.

Este proyecto está dirigido para emprendimientos turísticos comunitarios de grupos étnicos y familias campesinas, que desarrollen ideas de negocios en torno a los siguientes productos turísticos:

- **Turismo de Naturaleza:** Consiste en el aprovechamiento turístico de los ecosistemas de manera sostenible, fomentando el cuidado de los recursos para que estos sean atractivos para los visitantes. Dentro de los subproductos existentes, enfocaremos especial atención en el **Ecoturismo y el Turismo rural**, con el fin de generar un fortalecimiento en las áreas ligadas a zonas rurales.
- **Avistamiento de Aves:** Este turismo es considerado como de "alto valor" y Colombia al tener más de 1900 especies de aves, 70 de ellas endémicas, se ha convertido atractivo para este tipo de turistas, con la ventaja de que todo el territorio nacional es potencial para dicha clase de turismo.
- **Turismo Cultural:** La cultura baluarte de los pueblos, se ha convertido en un producto atractivo para la oferta turística que busca cada vez más compartir experiencias con comunidades, saliéndose del turismo convencional y adentrándose en una oferta mucho más auténtica. Dentro del turismo cultural seleccionaremos proyectos de subproductos como **Gastronomía, Artesanías, Rutas culturales, etc.**
- **Turismo de Bienestar:** Enfocado en fortalecer la integridad corporal y espiritual de quienes deciden visitar los lugares que permitan ejercer este tipo de turismo, aprovechando así el potencial que tiene nuestro país con sus bosques, termales, volcanes de lodo, medicina tradicional, los cuales pueden llegar a ser desarrollados con mayor profundidad mediante la capacitación de la comunidad habitante en estas zonas, con el objetivo de crear actividades orientadas que puedan explotar dichas riquezas naturales.

Source: <https://sites.google.com/view/convocatoriaturismocomunitario/p%C3%A1gina-principal>

### Project Basic Information (Summary in Spanish)

<b>Nombre Entidad / Empresa Proponente</b>	Asociación Jardín Botánico Las Delicias.		
<b>RNT</b>	<i>Se gestionara con el desarrollo de la propuesta</i>		
<b>Objeto o Razón Social:</b>	Asociación Jardín Botánico Las Delicias. Organización sin ánimo de lucro.		
<b>Tipo de Entidad (marque con una X):</b>	<b>Empresa</b>		
	<b>Organización de Desarrollo Empresarial</b>		
<b>Fecha de Constitución:</b>	Enero/ 07/ 1999	<b>Años de Existencia:</b>	18
<b>Departamento - Ciudad:</b>	Cauca, Inza y Silvia		
<b>Dirección:</b>	Vereda Rio Sucio, Municipio de Inza y Resguardo Indígena de Guambia. (Vereda San Fernando) Municipio de Silvia- Cauca		
<b>Teléfono Entidad Proponente:</b>	3113736470 – 3506525879 - 3117766341		
<b>Página Web:</b>			
<b>Nombre Representante Legal:</b>	Floresmiro Calambas Morales.		
<b>Correo electrónico de Representante Legal:</b>	<a href="mailto:floresmirocalambas@gmail.com">floresmirocalambas@gmail.com</a> – <a href="mailto:waramik10@gmail.com">waramik10@gmail.com</a>		
<b>Persona de contacto a cargo del Proyecto:</b>	Yoli Janeth Muelas Calambas.		
<b>Teléfono:</b>	3116162501		
<b>Correo electrónico:</b>	<a href="mailto:myolijaneth@yahoo.com">myolijaneth@yahoo.com</a>		

## Project Description (Summary in Spanish)

Nombre de la propuesta	Øsik Waramik PurØ Tapchik. Escuela Viva de la Naturaleza para promover el Turismo de avistamiento de Aves en el bosque Nublado alto andino en los municipios de Inzá y Silvia en el Departamento del Cauca.
Proponente	Asociación Jardín Botánico las delicias.
Departamento – Ciudad de Intervención:	Vereda de Rio Sucio, Municipio de Inzá y Resguardo Indígena de Guambia Municipio de Silvia Departamento del Cauca.
Comunidad que representa	Comunidad Indígena Misak Guámbianos de Silvia y Comunidad Campesina de Rio Sucio - Inzá Cauca.
Antecedentes (Resumen de la trayectoria de la comunidad, y su proceso de integración al turismo comunitario)	<p>La Asociación Jardín Botánico Las Delicias fue creada en el año 1.999 como una estrategia de mejoramiento de la calidad de vida de las poblaciones locales a través de la conservación del medio ambiente. Es una organización no gubernamental de carácter socio ambiental, conformada por indígenas de la etnia Misak del Resguardo Indígena de Guambia en el municipio de Silvia-Cauca y Campesinos de Tierradentro, en el Municipio de Inzá-Cauca. Nuestra organización se creó como una propuesta intercultural encaminada a recuperar y potenciar nuestros valores, saberes y prácticas culturales y fortalecer la participación de diversas comunidades rurales en procesos de conservación medioambiental en el Departamento del Cauca. Del año 2002 al 2004, con la cofinanciación del Ecofondo realizamos el establecimiento de nuestro Jardín Botánico Comunitario en su primera fase y aunque la ejecución de este proyecto fue exitoso en términos de los resultados y proyecciones sociales, culturales, educativas, ambientales y en el manejo técnico, financiero y administrativo, desafortunadamente tuvimos que suspender nuestras actividades por los graves problemas de orden público en dicha región en ese entonces. Los Misak regresamos a nuestro territorio en el resguardo de Guambia en Silvia, y los compañeros campesinos tuvieron que dejar sus tierras y se desplazaron a otros lugares. Esta situación generó la dispersión y el debilitamiento de nuestra organización; nuestra reserva forestal quedó abandonada y las infraestructuras como el invernadero, vivero y los senderos ecológicos se han deteriorado con el paso del tiempo. No obstante el habernos enfrentado a ver nuestros sueños frustrados, podemos decir con certeza que si tuvimos la oportunidad de comenzar a generar un modelo integral de educación, investigación y conservación de la naturaleza basado en nuestros valores culturales y la semilla que sembramos en ese entonces, representada en concientización del recurso humano, hoy ha dado frutos jugosos. Muchos de los que entonces eran niños y jóvenes del grupo de teatro, hoy son adultos y algunos llevan a cabo estudios enfocados a fortalecer nuestra cultura y proteger nuestros recursos naturales.</p> <p>Hoy día, y después de la firma del tratado de paz entre el gobierno y las Farc, queremos reactivar nuestra organización para continuar con nuestras labores de recuperación cultural y ecológicas en nuestro Departamento del Cauca. Teniendo en cuenta la valiosa experiencia adquirida a través de la ejecución del establecimiento de nuestro Jardín Botánico Comunitario, con la ejecución de este</p>

	<p>proyecto que colocamos en su consideración, nos proponemos generar un modelo propio de educación ambiental y fortalecimiento cultural fundamentado en el turismo de avistamiento de aves, ya que en nuestra reserva forestal se aprecia una gran diversidad y riqueza de flora y fauna que es importante promover y proteger. Estamos convencidos del rol esencial que jugamos las comunidades indígenas y campesinas en la preservación de la naturaleza y como a través de esta podemos generar fuentes económicas para el mejoramiento de nuestra calidad de vida. Consideramos que una de las formas de hacer de esta iniciativa una realidad es por medio de este proyecto.</p>
Corredor Turístico	<p>Corredor Pacífico: Choco, Cauca Valle del Cauca, y Nariño. (Algunos de sus atractivos turísticos son: La isla Gorgona, El Parque Natural Purace y termales, Inza, Arboleda-Ermitas, Silvia, Popayán, El Cerrito-Hacienda la María, Buenaventura, Parque Utria, Quibdó, Las Fiestas de San Pacho, El Festival de la Migración, Termales, Levantamiento de tumbas, La unión, El lago Calima, La Basílica del Señor de los Milagro-Buga y Cali )</p>
Producto Turístico	<p>Programa de Turismo de avistamiento de aves, con participación de comunidades locales en bosque alto andino del resguardo indígena de Guambia y en la Vereda de Rio-Sucio en el Departamento del Cauca</p>
Objetivo general de la propuesta	<p>Estructurar un programa de turismo comunitario y de avistamiento de aves, que involucra a las comunidades locales y promueve un turismo responsable y en armonía con la naturaleza.</p>
Descripción de la propuesta	<p>El Departamento del Cauca cuenta con una gran diversidad de atractivos y recursos históricos, culturales, naturales y étnicos, todos ellos de gran interés para el desarrollo turístico comunitario del Departamento. Aunque han existido algunos ejercicios de planificación anteriores, en la actualidad no se cuenta con un plan de desarrollo turístico vigente, aprobado y ejecutado por los actores del sistema turístico. Esta situación justifica la necesidad de dotarse de un instrumento de planificación que oriente las políticas turísticas y determine el curso de acciones a seguir para el desarrollo armónico, sustentable y solidario de esta actividad económica (*Fuente: Plan de Desarrollo Turístico para el Departamento del Cauca Documento Diagnostico Turístico del Cauca. Marzo 2012)</p> <p>Por medio de este proyecto nos proponemos crear un Programa de Turismo Comunitario, en el que se integran acciones de Turismo enfocadas en fortalecer la estructuración de un producto de Avistamiento de Aves, a partir de la escuela viva de la naturaleza (Θsik Waramik PurΘ Tapchik) para la educación, investigación y conservación de nuestros ecosistemas alto andinos con varios propósitos: 1. Concientizar a los turistas y visitantes sobre la importancia biocultural de los ecosistemas alto andinos, haciendo un especial énfasis en la protección de los hábitats de especies de fauna y flora que son nuestros activos principales. 2. Planificar el desarrollo turístico de nuestra región en el que se promueva el turismo de avistamiento de aves como una línea de trabajo comunitario. 3. Mejorar nuestra calidad de vida a través de los servicios de turismo comunitario y de naturaleza que se presten a nuestros visitantes.</p>