

**Capacity Building and Empowerment in an Amazon Community: Evidence from
Tuntanain Communal Reserve, Perú, 2016-2018**

By

CANCHARI HERMITAÑ O, Beatriz

CAPSTONE PROJECT

Submitted to

KDI School of Public Policy and Management

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

For the Degree of

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Case study title: Capacity Building and Empowerment in an Amazon Community: Evidence from Tuntanain Communal Reserve, Perú, 2016-2018.

Author: Canchari Hermitaño, Beatriz

Country: Peru

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Sector: Participatory Governance

Implementation years: From 2016 to 2018

Implementing agency: United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and Peruvian Authority of Protected Natural Areas (*Sernanp*, in Spanish) belonging to the Ministry of Environment of Peru.

Lead practitioner/s: National coordinator of the EBA Amazon Project. Also, as a main partner, local Sernanp's head in charge of the Tuntanain Communal Reserve.

Development challenge: Weak participation of the local population in the management of a territory.

Intervention: Strengthening the participatory management of the territory.

Delivery challenges: 1) Leadership instability 2) Community distrust, 3) Low capacity

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2012, Peru gave legal power to Indigenous communities to co-manage a protected natural area in their ancestral homeland, the Tuntanain Communal Reserve, in coordination with the State. The policy aimed to enable the community to participate in conservation activities and benefit from sustainable economic development.

Unfortunately, the reality on the ground did not match the purpose of the law. There was little engagement by the local population and resources not provided by the state. Furthermore, Indigenous representation had deficiencies in its organizational and technical capacity.

In 2016, the United Nations Development Programme and the Peruvian Authority of Protected Natural Areas launched the strengthening participatory management component of the Ecosystems-based Adaptation Amazon project with the objective of making stronger capacities for the co-management of the Tuntanain Communal Reserve.

The effort included instruments such as incentive-based conservation agreements, a leadership school, and an eco-business diploma program implemented during 2017. As a consequence, around one year later, the strengthened co-government structure was able to work together, with the help of strategic alliances, to leverage around 1.5 million USD of national public funds. The project's efforts to empower Indigenous communities, strengthen the management capacities of the partners, and overcome implementation challenges holds several lessons on sharing power and responsibilities between the State and local citizens.

INTRODUCTION

According to the Political Constitution of Peru, the State is obliged to promote the conservation of biological diversity and protected natural areas (*ANP* in Spanish)¹. In 1997, the legislation² pointed out that the ANPs were the nation's heritage and defined them as territorial spaces for conservation contributing to the sustainable development of the country. Likewise, communal reserves were considered a category of ANP where the conservation should benefit the local population, which includes Indigenous communities.

Later, in 2005, a special regime³ established a participatory structure for administration and management of the communal reserves in which the State and local communities have to play a role. It enabled opportunities for local communities to participate actively in decision-making after a period of request from Amazon Indigenous communities to the State. The structure aimed to promote conservation and sustainable resource use that would generate economic benefits for local communities with their participation.

Under this structure, duly organized communities should assume administration of the communal reserves through an Administration Contract Executor (*ECA* in Spanish). Meanwhile, the Peruvian Authority for the Protection of Natural Areas (*Sernanp* in Spanish) would maintain a close relationship and communication with the ECA for the ease of its management functions. At the same time, Sernanp would continue with its supervision and sanctioning functions through

¹ Article 69 of The Political Constitution of Peru (1993).

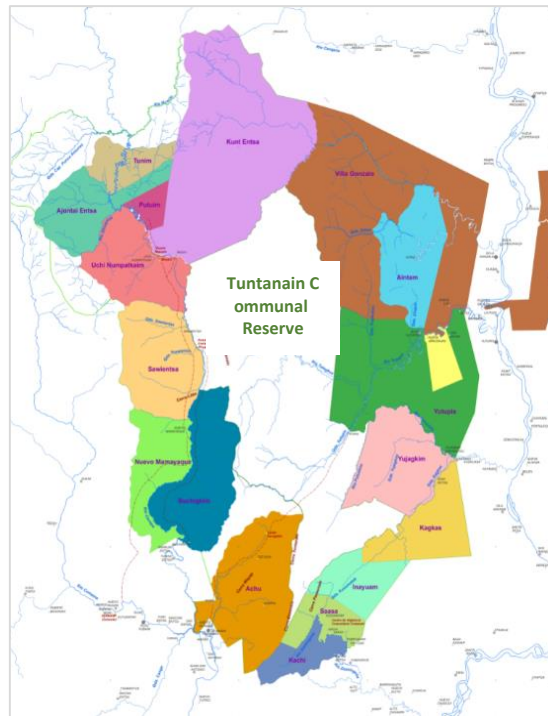
² The Protected Natural Areas Law (*Ley N°26834* in Spanish) and its regulation (*Decreto Supremo N°038-2001-AG* in Spanish)

³ Special Regimen for the Administration of The Communal Reserves (*Resolución de Intendencia N°019-2005-INRENA-IANP* in Spanish).

its decentralized offices in the regions (Local Sernanp). This participatory administration and management are formally established through the signing of an Administration Contract between the ECA and the Local Sernanp of each communal reserve.

In 2007, the Tuntanain Communal Reserve, the seventh⁴ such reserve, was created at the request of 18 Indigenous communities belonging to the Awajún or Wampis ethnic groups. This reserve is located in northern Peru in the Condorcanqui province of the Amazonas department with an area of 95,000 hectares. At that time, the total population was roughly 7,000 inhabitants who settled around the reserve and conducted traditional activities such as subsistence agriculture, hunting, and gathering. Map 1 shows the distribution of the Indigenous communities (in colored areas) around the reserve.

Map 1: Ubication of Indigenous communities belonging to the Tuntanain Communal Reserve



Source: The Peruvian Authority of Protected Natural Areas, Environmental Minister of Peru

⁴ Before 2007, there were six communal reserves: Yanasha (1988), El Sira (2001), Amaraeri (2002), Machiguenga (2003), Asháninka (2003), and Purús (2004). After 2007, three additional communal reserves were created: Chayu Nain (2009), Huimeki (2012), and Airo Pai (2012). In total, at the end of this study, there are 10 communal reserves in Peru.

In 2012, members from 18 Indigenous communities elected Daniel Inchipis as president of the ECA of the Tuntanain Communal Reserve (ECA Tuntanain). ECA Tuntanain and Local Sernanp signed an Administration Contract the same year that officially established a participatory administration and management structure in the Tuntanain Communal Reserve.

Despite the legal grant of administrative power to Indigenous communities, ECA Tuntanain was added to the existing six communal reserves that already had signed an administration contract with Sernanp but lacked experience, administrative and technical capabilities, and economic resources to truly assume the assigned administrative functions. “The institutional development of ECA Tuntanain was precarious,” said Carlos Hernández, Institutional Strengthening Coordinator of the EBA Amazon project. “They have never done that before.”

As a consequence, the Local Sernanp office continued to manage the communal reserves, particularly for conservation and control purposes. This situation generated many effects. First, non-compliance of the right of the Indigenous communities of to be decision-makers in the administration of their territories. Second, failure to take advantage of the ancestral knowledge of the communities. Third, no benefits were generated for the Indigenous population.

In 2013, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) started to implement the Ecosystems-based Adaptation (EBA) Amazon Project with funding from Germany. The project aimed to reduce climate change vulnerability for the Indigenous communities in two areas in Peru. One of these was the Tuntanain Communal Reserve, which by that time had underperformed all other Peruvian communal areas in terms of a number of projects designed with the communities. Therefore, the EBA Amazon Project team aimed to improve its situation through the project.

In particular, the UNDP project team focused on addressing four factors to reduce climate change vulnerability: 1) Increase of income, 2) Reduction of food insecurity, 3) Improvement of biodiversity, and 4) Strengthening of governance, through two main components. The first component was related to promotion of sustainable productive activities considering key elements of the territory’s ecosystem. The second was strengthening the participatory management of the Tuntanain Communal Reserve, that we will call the strengthening component throughout developing this case.

The objective of this latter component was to empower the alliance between ECA Tuntanain and Local Sernanp as members of the participatory management structure of the Tuntanain Communal Reserve. Both of them may fulfill not only conservation goals but also the development ones in a collaborative and complementary way. For instance, to promote economic activities along the value chain of a given product would involve organizing Indigenous producers to engage in sustainable activities and connect with markets located in the cities. Hernández considered that local communities alone cannot carry out such activities. Also, control and supervision of illegal activities around the reserve would not be possible by Local Sernanp alone, they need to local communities.

EBA project leaders conducted a participatory process with stakeholders in 2016 to define interventions of the strengthening component, implemented from mid-2016 to early 2018, in coordination with ECA Tuntanain and Local Sernanp.

At the same time this process started (early 2016), ECAs and head of communal reserves approved the model of co-management⁵ with the objective of strengthening and improving the participatory structure defined in the special regimen of 2005 during the national meeting of reserve communal. The main contribution of the model was to deem the communal reserves an indispensable asset for regional development. Also, it defined three principles: Intercultural, trust and transparency⁶ that would guide the decisions, actions, and a way of relating between the partners of the co-management. Also, the joint and complementary work between the parties would be based on their strengths and weaknesses. Moreover, coordination and collaboration with other local actors such as Regional and Municipal Governments is included in the model of regional development with communal reserve. See Figure 1.

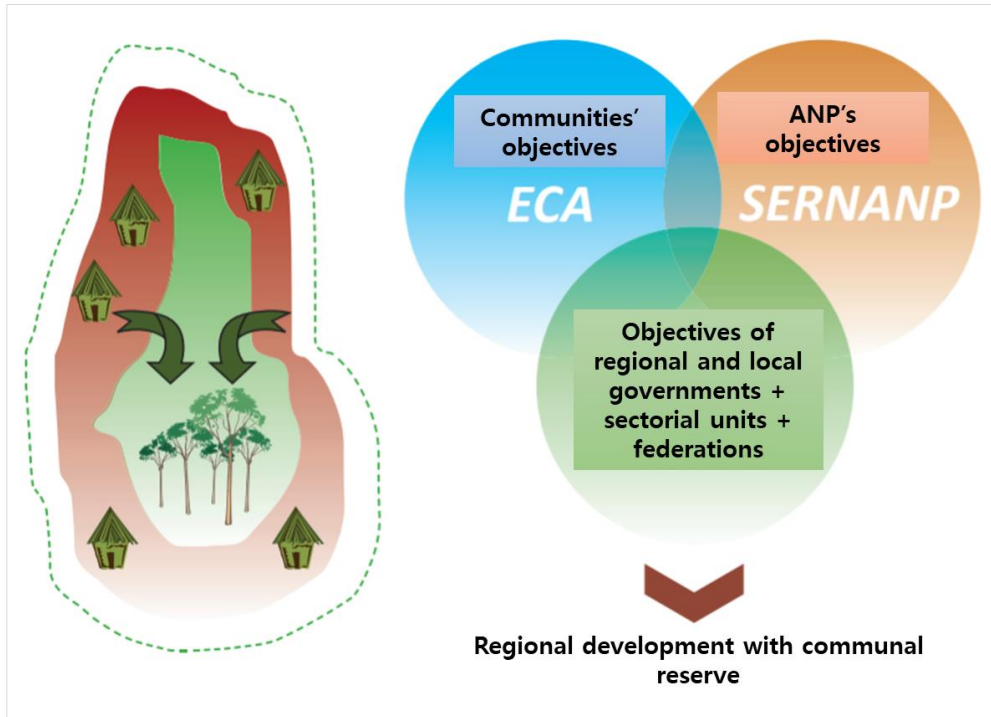
The EBA Amazon Project team collaborated in the process of designing the co-management model based on experience starting around 2013 in the Tuntanain Communal Reserve with the implementation of the EBA Amazon project. Since that time, the participatory

⁵ Sernanp (2016). Modelo para orientar la Co-Gestión hacia la conservación y el desarrollo sostenible de una región con reserva communal.

⁶ Intercultural principle promotes respect and tolerance of the diversity of the realities and conditions of the actors. Also, the trust principle means actors act with compromise, respect, and honesty that will promote a joint and cooperative work. Finally, the transparency fosters adequate and timely information and accountability.

structure defined in the special regime was called a co-management structure. We will use this term throughout the case.

Figure 1: Communal Reserve as an asset for a regional development



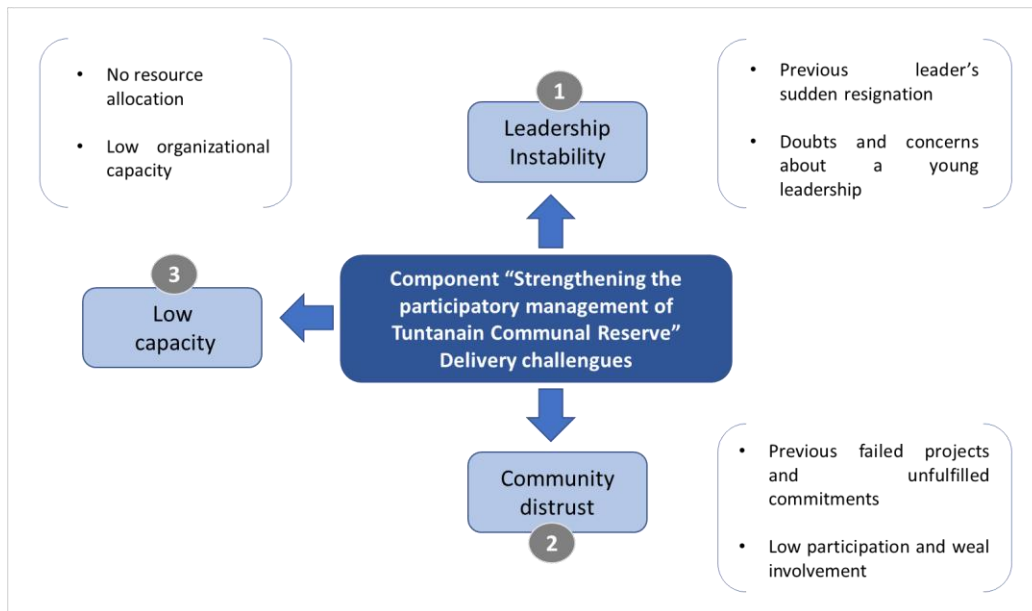
Source: The Peruvian Authority of Protected Natural Areas, Environmental Minister of Peru

The communal reserve area and the territory of the neighboring communities that include the buffer zone in the case of the Tuntanain Communal Reserve compound the geographical scope of the application of the co-management model. This means that in this area, Local Sernanp and ECA Tuntanain could take decisions and actions to accomplish the twin objectives of conservation and sustainable use of the natural resources to improve the quality of life of indigenous communities.

DELIVERY CHALLENGES

Project efforts addressed three main delivery challenges: leadership instability, community distrust, and low capacity. The Figure 2 summarizes them.

Figure 2: Overview of Delivery Challenges



Leadership Instability

At the end of 2016, the third year of implementing the EBA Amazon Project, the head of the Local Sernanp specialist Jessica Tsajamain, who helped manage the communal reserve, recalled: "I was telling my colleagues to be ready because a new head from Lima would surely come. In the last days of 2016, we checked the resolutions website every day to see who would be the new boss." The head of the Tuntanain Communal Reserve resigned from his post⁷. This left the Local Sernanp office without leadership, which raised doubts and concerns about project sustainability, mainly by the EBA Amazon Project team and National Sernanp. The project lacked of a leader of an arm of the co-management structure generated a period of pause in the execution of the EBA Amazon Project.

⁷ Based on information collected during fieldwork, the reason for the resignation was due to personal motivations.

Community distrust

The co-management structure of the Tuntanain Communal Reserve, installed in 2012 with the signing of the Administration Contract, placed Indigenous communities duly organized in charge of the administration and management of the reserve to promote conservation and sustainable use of resources. However, when the strengthening component began to be implemented in 2017, the local population distrusted authorities like Local Sernanp due to previous failed projects and unfulfilled commitments. Therefore, they had not been very involved with conservation and sustainable use of resources in previous years. "You have to show the communities that you do what you say and commit to, otherwise the communities do not trust you," Tsajamain said. Although some communities volunteered to guard against illegal activities such as illegal logging and poaching that put the flora and wildlife of the protected area at risk⁸, there still was low participation and weak involvement.

Low Capacity

When ECA Tuntanain was created in 2012, it did not receive any initial government funding due to its legal status as a non-profit legal entity. The special regime mentions that the economic resources of ECA Tuntanain come from the contributions of Indigenous organizations and those generated by the services provided by the communal reserve, such as income from visitors and payment of rights by concessionaires. Those options were not applied to the ECA Tuntanain due to lack of capacities and resources as a new organization. Inchipis received a pension as a retired teacher, but the rest of his team was volunteers with limited income. This made it difficult to carry out basic management operations to represent 18 constituent Indigenous communities.

For instance, it was costly to visit the communities, which were geographically dispersed and difficult to access. "If you do not have money you cannot visit to the Indigenous communities," Hernandez said. This made it hard to coordinate with local populations to, for instance, promote sustainable productive activities due to this activity requiring a budget for transportation by river

⁸ Sernanp (2016). Modelo para orientar la Co-Gestión hacia la conservación y el desarrollo sostenible de una región con reserva communal.

which is more expensive than by road. This challenge was common among the existing communal reserves by 2016, according to National Sernanp⁹.

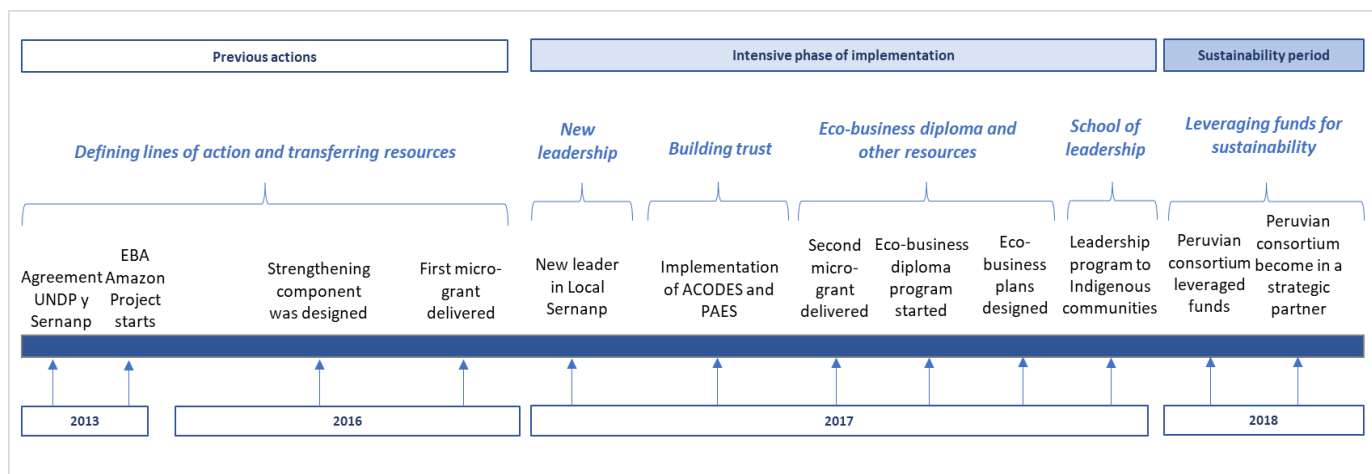
Moreover, when ECA Tuntanain assumed the role of managing the Tuntanain Communal Reserve, it did not have experience or expertise in managing an organization with 18 Indigenous communities. The organization had previously faced difficulties earning community support, and community representatives did not participate in formulating, for instance the Annual Operative Plan or other institutional documents.

Inchipsis was an experienced and motivated leader but factors such as geographic dispersion, lack of economic resources and low organizational capabilities hindered coordination with constituent communities to design and implement sustainable economic development projects or look for other funding sources to generate economic benefits for the community.

TRACING THE IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

In this section the process of implementation of the strengthening component will explain. In the Figure 3 a timeline is present in order to have an overview of it.

Figure 3: The Implementation Timeline for the Component “Strengthening the participatory management of the Tuntanain Communal Reserve”



⁹ Sernanp (2016). Modelo para orientar la Co-Gestión hacia la conservación y el desarrollo sostenible de una región con reserva communal.

Defining lines of action and transferring resources

Before the implementation of the EBA Amazon Project, the UNDP signed an agreement with National Sernanp in 2013 to obtain the necessary approval and support. However, inadequate involvement of local stakeholders from the beginning of the project created delays in the implementation of planned activities scheduled to take place over the next four years. This is very relevant in protected natural areas where Indigenous communities have their own vision of the world based on their ancestral knowledge and customs which is important to include in the early stage of the projects. As a result, the project timeline was extended from mid-2017 to early 2018.

“In 2015, we did not know much about the EBA Amazon Project,” Tsajamain said. “There was not much coordination and co-management was not flowing as it should be.” Also, Yamir Tenorio, a project specialist of Local Sernanp, said, “During the first three years of the project, there was not too much of a relationship between ECA Tuntanain, Local Sernanp and the UNDP team.”

However, those partners better defined the strengthening component of the EBA Amazon Project in early 2016. Rather than rely on a secretive meeting of experts - a failed approach used in the first three years of the EBA Amazon Project - project leaders implemented a bottom-up strategy to define lines of action over a six-month period, summoning local actors.

Starting in April 2016, they held workshops with stakeholders including members of ECA Tuntanain, Local Sernanp and Indigenous communities. They proposed prioritized actions for the strengthening component. Later, those proposed measures by ECA Tuntanain, Local Sernanp and Indigenous communities were presented to a technical team at National Sernanp. Then they brought their feedback to the co-management members for a final validation process.

As a result of the participatory process that involved members of Local Sernanp and the ECA Tuntanain board of directors, by June 2016 specific priority measures for strengthening the co-management structure were in place. First, to improve the involvement of ECA Tuntanain in the management of the reserve. Second, to promote an active role and commitment of the Indigenous communities in the management of the communal reserve. Third, to identify

functions that correspond to each member of the co-management structure. Finally, to obtain resources and financial sustainability for the management of the reserve¹⁰.

Tsajamain said: “In mid-2016 we became empowered by implementing the strengthening component. From that moment, we begin to understand the logic of co-management. Decisions are really made together. And in the process, I learned it worked.”

One of the first actions within the strengthening component’s framework, during the last months of 2016, was the transference of a micro-grant of resources to ECA Tuntanain, to revitalize and strengthen its capacity as manager. This decision was made based on positive results coming from another national program named *FONCODES*. “The best way is through the transfer of resources to communities to dynamize its organizational capacities,” Hernández said. “The best way to develop organizational capabilities is to manage.” This first grant was for hiring technical, productive, and administrative personnel to join the ECA Tuntanain team to accompany the implementation of the EBA Amazon project’s activities.

A test for new leadership

At the start of 2017, Tsajamain became acting head of Local Sernanp, which included the Tuntanain Communal Reserve, as well as two other areas, due to the previous leader’s sudden resignation. Tsajamain was a 28-year-old Indigenous woman with an infant daughter and little leadership experience, having worked on protected natural areas for less than three years. “The situation in the three areas at that time was not good,” she said. “But I thought about it and decided to take on the challenge.” Fortunately, in her first days as head of Local Sernanp, she found inspiration in her colleagues’ positivity and commitment to problem-solving.

In mid-February 2017, the team faced an early challenge during a meeting in the provincial capital of Santa Maria de Nieva. National Sernanp officials from Lima attended, as well as professionals from UNDP and other organizations linked to the EBA Amazon Project. Tsajamain’s team heard concerns about the sustainability of the project, due to the change of leadership of Local Sernanp.

¹⁰ PNUD (2016). Plan de fortalecimiento institucional y de capacidades para la gestión de las reservas comunales de Amaraeri y Tuntanain.

Training and empowering key actors of implementation: park rangers

After the meeting, Tsajamain decided to empower and raise awareness her field team, the park rangers of the communal reserve. According to the protected natural areas regulations¹¹, park rangers are part of the technical personnel of the Local Sernanp office that report to the head of the communal reserve. Their main functions are control and surveillance of the area through routine and special patrols in order to detect and inform on activities that cause negative impact in the area. By 2016, all the park rangers of the Local Sernanp of the Tuntanain Communal Reserve were Indigenous and belonging to the Awajún or Wampis ethnic groups and had previous experience in protected natural areas. These facilitated interactions with Indigenous communities, especially in terms of the language and cultural aspects, and access to the communities by the river and on foot.

During the implementation of the productive activities' component, during the first years of the EBA Amazon Project, park rangers played the role of companion to technical specialists of the project on field trips. "We were going out with specialists hired by the EBA Amazon Project to make meetings, monitor, train, and deliver materials. As an ally we have gone out together," said Teófilo Ukunchamu, park ranger. "Communities know us. This facilitated entry into the communities," said Jeconías Apikaika, another park ranger.

This mix of foreign and local expertise allowed park rangers to learn and improve their technical skills in at least one of the four productive activities promoted in the Tuntanain Communal Reserve: fish farming with local species, production of native cacao, shiringa (natural leather), and poultry. "When the biologists carried out training of communities, we also learned. We also had training and internships," said the park ranger, Segundo Tuyas. Also, the experts accomplished the training objective, thanks to the translation work carried out by the park rangers.

Additionally, park rangers had another important role of representative of the head of the communal reserve in the areas where the head could be present¹². This function was not totally understood until Jessica Tsajamain assumed the leadership of Local Sernanp. She believed

¹¹ Reglamento de la Ley de Áreas Naturales Protegidas (2001)

¹² Reglamento de la Ley de Áreas Naturales Protegidas (2001)

that park rangers were key to sustaining the project once activities ended. “They are the ones who are going to stay,” she said. “I am only temporary.” Since they came from the communities, the park rangers understood the culture and language of the area. Tsajamain solicited solutions from the park rangers and encouraged them to be proactive. “I made the park rangers understand that they had the power to change in their hands and that everything depended on them and not on me,” she said. “I told them: You are me wherever you are.” She used to repeat this expression to the park rangers which meant that the park rangers could make some decisions based on previous experience made with Tsajamain. The goal was for the park rangers to achieve independence on certain routine actions.

Changing public communications

In parallel, the park rangers were trained to use a new communication strategy to improve the public image of Local Sernanp and regain the confidence of Indigenous communities in a co-management structure. They knew it would not be easy, because of unfulfilled promises, incomplete projects, and disappointing results from past initiatives. Instead of saying, “It is a UNDP project and I am coming on behalf of Sernanp,” they would say, “It is a project of the Sernanp that is being implemented with UNDP and I am coming on behalf of the co-management of the Tuntanain Communal Reserve.”

This new form of approach to the communities, led by Local Sernanp through the park rangers, contributed to the improvement of the image that the communities had of the organization. “In the productive activities implemented by UNDP team, there was always a park ranger who supported and accompanied,” Nuning said. “This allowed the communities to understand that Sernanp was capturing projects for the benefit of the communities with the support of ECA Tuntanain. This has taken time. In this period, there have been threats and equipment burning.”

Building trust with local communities through participatory incentive mechanism

The starting point to strengthen the co-management structure was to begin with the Indigenous communities. In particular, the idea was to recover the initial commitment of the population of create the communal reserve and co-management it. It was the “main axis” of the strengthening component, according to Hernández.

Also, recovering the trust of the population was a challenge due to the unsuccessful interventions implemented in the area. For example, when Teófilo Ukunchamu went to the communities to promote shiringa production, the Indigenous populations used to say, “This activity will not work. We already produced that before.” Based on his experience, the population’s reaction was due to previous interventions not considering the complete channel of the product from extraction of resources to sale. As a consequence, the beneficiaries were unable to sell their products, generating discomfort in the communities. “In 2007 a project trained the population in natural leather production but it did not consider the sale channel, so it did not work,” he said.

To address that, during 2016 the Project sent a team made up of park rangers from Local Sernanp, Indigenous leaders and producers from the Tuntanain Communal Reserve, to other Peruvian communities to learn how those productive activities were working and implement lessons gleaned in the Tuntanain Communal Reserve. This experience demonstrated to key stakeholders that productive activities were feasible and beneficial when considering the entire value chain and incorporating improvements in production methods¹³. Virgilio Nunig, the current president of the Shiringa Producers Association (*APROSHICO* in Spanish) and one of the beneficiaries, said, “we gained experience [about technical methods to produce shiringa] from the Asháninka community.”

Despite this, the population distrusted local authorities and their commitment in the management of the reserve was weak. In response to that, two instruments were implemented. The first one was the Agreements for Conservation and Development (*ACODES* in Spanish), which were formal documents aimed at improving the linkage between Indigenous communities and co-management members. *ACODES* included commitments assumed by each of the members of the co-management structure mainly based on the Master Plan of the Tuntanain Communal Reserve, and duties assumed by Indigenous communities based on the objectives of the Indigenous communal plans.

¹³ This activity was part of the first component of the EBA Amazon Project, promotion of sustainable productive activities, which is not addressed in this case study.

The second instrument was the Sustainable Economic Activities Program (*PAES* in Spanish) which was used as an incentive for communities to sign the *ACODES* due to offered the possibility of financing local sustainable development projects after an application process.

During March and May 2017, the co-management members prepared the required documents of the *ACODES* for 12 of the member communities of the Tuntanain Communal Reserve, which were selected based on the existing threat level such as deforestation, illegal activities, and invasions, as well as their willingness to work collaboratively. *ECA Tuntanain* and *Sernanp*, as agreement promoters, defined what kind of commitments communities should assume according to the type and level existing in their area. “The first step was to define what the co-management was interested in,” said Hernández. For example, not continuing to rent their land and not give access to illegal extraction of resources. After that, those commitments were raised to the community for discussion and negotiation.

In May 2017, the co-management members and the UNDP team made the first round of visits to 12 of the member communities of the Tuntanain Communal Reserve to promote the benefits of working together for the conservation and economic development of the area, through the *ACODES* and *PAES* instruments.

The condition of being members of *ECA Tuntanain* and their need to develop productive activities facilitated the convening, dialogue, and negotiation. *Inchipis*, as president of *ECA Tuntanain*, lead the process. With previous coordination and permission of the high authority of the Indigenous community, named *APU* in the Tuntanain Communal Reserve, the community assembly¹⁴ began.

The full one-day agenda was used productively. It started with a presentation of the objectives and roles of *Local Sernanp* and *ECA Tuntanain* as members of the co-management structure. Then, proposal commitments were presented for dialogue and negotiation with the local villagers. In the next step, a written act of agreement was signed as a symbol of approval of the terms. The formal signature would come in August. Additionally, the activities of *PAES* funds

¹⁴ Those meetings are the space where the entire population of the community participates with the participation of its leader.

were raised in those meetings and participants elected their representatives for an eco-business diploma.

For instance, the community of Inayuam belonging to the Tuntanain Communal Reserve, despite an unfavorable image of Sernanp and the ECA Tuntanain, decided to join, talk personally, and trust after an internal dialogue between their leader and the community's 120 members. Levis Pijushkunsh, one of the Inayuam community leaders, said, "if we do not have confidence we cannot dialogue. We must go forward."

Tsajamain said the most challenging part of community visits was addressing local hostility and demands. Her team tried to offer proposals instead of impulsive reactions. She said: "We have to sit down to talk. It is true that in the past we have been bad, but now we want to work with you again. I want you to trust me again. What do you need? What do you propose?"

During the dialogue, Tsajamain explained the co-management roles and the objectives of their visit and what they could not offer as a conservation institution and not a municipal authority. For example, Tsajamain would explain that Local Sernanp was not opposed to small-scale fishing or hunting.

Each community that accepted the proposal to work together began a dialogue with the co-management team about the four productive activities identified for improvement: fish farming with local species, production of native cacao, shiringa (natural leather), and poultry. These activities were pre-existing carried out by the community itself with no negative impact on the ecosystem of the protected area. Also, those activities were part of local community plans and the Master Plan of the Tuntanain Communal Reserve. It allowed protection of the ecosystem of the reserve. On the other hand, producing non-site products, for example, cloned cocoa versions, damages native cacao and deteriorates and impoverishes the soil. "Those [non-site products] are the main driver of deforestation in the Amazon," Jorge Herrera, a PNUD Specialist said. The team would try to work with the community to make its activities more productive and more sustainable for the benefit of local communities, while preserving the ecosystem of the area.

Their objective was not to obligate the communities to work with co-management. Tenorio said: "We did not go to brainwash them, to tell them that we have good proposals. We

opted to let them see that their neighbors are working on forest conservation, or making fish farms, or working with native cacao, or making sheets of shiringa.”

After the dialogue and negotiation, local community leaders defined specific commitments for conservation and sustainable use of resources, and ECA Tuntanain and Local Sernanp defined specified agreements to support the fulfillment of those commitments. In some cases, the communities’ commitments meant not carrying out activities that affect the protected area such as illegal logging. In other cases, those meant to formalize the economic activity. In both cases, the co-management members did not request commitments. On the contrary, the dialogue allowed communities to define realistic and achievable commitments. “[The idea was] to generate progressive processes of change,” Hernández said, “If an agreement is not enforceable, reduce one level.” Likewise, the co-management members promised to help communities meet those commitments. Hernández said, “I will do but help me [The mutual collaboration] was the base of the ACODES.

Each of the 12 communities signed formally an ACODES, in the community assemblies with the participation of the Indigenous population on August 2017. Tsajamain said, “With the visits to the communities for the ACODES signatures, the trust of the communities was gained.” She added that it was culturally important for remote rural areas in Peru that the co-management leaders themselves visited the communities to sign agreements since it allows them to support the commitments adopted, rather than park rangers or specialists. Before the event, the communities applied for PAES funds by presenting their proposals to ECA Tuntanain.

Launching an eco-business diploma and other resources

The twelve communities presented proposals to be financed by the PAES fund, and also *APROSHICO* association, compounded by the producers of natural leather belonging to the reserve.

In July 2017, PAES fund financed 12 of the 13 proposals. Funding restrictions did not allow financing the thirteenth proposal; however, it received technical support by Local Sernanp. During the same month, an eco-business diploma program was launched to help the community leaders develop these selected proposals. The four-month training program focused on building local capacities to formulate business plans, one of the deficiencies in the co-management

structure. A team from a university in Lima with relevant experience in rural areas came to Condorcanqui province to teach classes to around 40 people made up of ECA Tuntanain members, a Local Sernanp team, local authorities' specialists and Indigenous representatives of the communities.

By the end of July 2017, the Indigenous communities, co-management members, and local authorities collaboratively developed 12 eco-business plans and with their implementation improved the production of the four productive activities prioritized for the Tuntanain Communal Reserve. Later, during the remaining three months of the program, the participants developed business plans to apply for municipal funding. This period allowed further strengthening of formulation capacities of the communities. Unfortunately, due to political decisions and the performance of previous projects, mainly poor execution, the municipality did not launch the fund that year.

Also, in July 2017, a second micro-grant was disbursed to ECA Tuntanain to manage the PAES. This involved the purchase and delivery of materials required for each of the 12 projects, with a financed valued on average of US\$10,000. During the implementation period of the fund, from August 2017 to March 2018, ECA Tuntanain continued to improve its capacity as a manager with Local Sernanp's support as a partner in monitoring and administration of activities. For instance, the park ranger as a monitor of productive activities encouraged the population to continue doing such activities. José Quraco, park ranger, used to say to the population, "if you continue with this activity, you could feed and educate your children."

One of the projects the PAES fund had financed benefited the APROSHICO association. This resource allowed the association to acquire material and create a seed fund to start operations such as the purchase of sheets of natural leather for the producers. "Once the EBA Amazon Project gave us opportunities such as internships, they left us with a fund to operate," Nunig said. "This resource has allowed us to maintain our operations until now."

In March 2018, there was a field trip to the communities to finalize the PAES Fund and monitor the commitments of ACODES.

Leveraging funds for sustainability

The implementing team knew PAES's funding would not be enough to sustain productive activities. Also, neither ECA Tuntanain nor Local Sernanp had the capacity or experience to leverage funds. Therefore, the UNDP team hired a Peruvian consortium made up of a Coffee and Cocoa organization and Analpes, a firm, for the period from August 2017 to March 2018 to formulate projects in coordination with ECA Tuntanain and Local Sernanp in order to apply them to existing national funds. Hernández called the role of the consortium, "resource manager and coordinator," because successful applications to national funds require specific technical and soft skills.

In the Peruvian context, there are several national funds in charge of different institutions and sectors. To access them, for the most part, it is necessary to present a project proposal with certain characteristics that vary by type of fund. Proposals are often disqualified because they do not comply with what is required, and the opportunity to access the fund is lost. The consortium leveraged its expertise to formulate adequate proposals and, with the local knowledge of ECA Tuntanain and Local Sernanp, managed to formulate six projects related to the four targeted productive activities valued at a total of more than US\$1.6 million.

Then the consortium applied for national funds and five of the six projects obtained financing for a total of US\$1.5 million, which amounts to around 60 times Local Sernanp's annual budget. These resources helped to secure continuity and scale up local activities and represented a tenfold return of the contract that the consortium had signed with the UNDP team. Likewise, this entrance of resources to the communities strengthened the agreements between the co-management members and the Indigenous population (*ACODES*) because, "they see the flow of resources organized," Hernandez said.

For instance, a project to promote shiringa (natural leather) production was implemented thanks to the granting of financing from the Serfor-CAF fund estimated at US\$ 300,000. This allowed an increase in annual production from 200 kilos to 2,000 kilos. As a result, the number of beneficiary families went up from 20 to 200. The windfall also strengthened the capacity of production of the organization of shiringa producers, APROSHICO, due to the fact that they were in charge of the implementation.

In March 2018, when the EBA Amazon Project was finalized, ECA Tuntanain decided to make an institutional agreement with the Analpes firm to continue its support as a strategic partner in financial sustainability for a period of five years. By 2020, three additional projects had raised national funds, two of which were under implementation.

School of leadership

The population of the communities elect the board of directors of the ECA Tuntanain during a general assembly. In this structure, the existence of local leadership is important for the survival and success of the organization and therefore of the co-management structure installed in the Tuntanain Communal Reserve. With this in mind, the UNDP team hired a Peruvian consortium to design and implement a leadership training program aimed at 25 members of the Indigenous communities of the Tuntanain Communal Reserve, from November 2017 to July 2018. Participants included current ECA Tuntanain members and others with the potential to become a leader, who were literate and had completed secondary school. The communities selected participants democratically.

OUTCOMES

By the time the strengthening component ended in March 2018, after roughly 1.5 years of implementation, local Indigenous communities had accepted ECA Tuntanain and Local Sernanp. There was trust, communication and a results-based approach to work, facilitated by the instruments implemented. “Right now, between ECA Tuntanain and Local Sernanp, we do not work for activities but for results and impacts that directly benefit the community,” Tenorio said. “There are organizations that have much more technical and administrative potential than we do, but we generate results with what we have.”

The micro-grants disbursed to ECA Tuntanain with the fundamental support of Local Sernanp increased its capacity as manager and executor.

The 13 ACODES signed showed the Indigenous communities’ confidence in the co-management members. Also, 12 PAES programs implemented meant that Indigenous communities were carrying out sustainable productive activities that did not endanger the ecosystem - they were now serving as front-line guardians of conservation. In this way, it was

possible to involve the population in the management of the reserve. Also, based on these results, 5 additional Indigenous communities signed up to be members ECA Tuntanain, increasing its membership from 18 to 23 by the end of 2018.

Donato Suwep, who performed as a park ranger in the first years of the EBA Amazon Project, returned to Local Sernanp after four years away and describes in his own words the whole new landscape he encountered upon arrival. Concerning the Indigenous communities, he sees changes. Suwep said, “The difference I see is that before in the community there was not so much concern, they were not doing any project. [Now], they have already improved the production of shiringa and cocoa. Although the project has already ended, the community beneficiaries of the project continue to carry out the activities.” One of the reasons, based on his experience, is that the population has benefited from the development of the activities. “With the poultry activity they feed themselves and they also sell it and with that they cover the needs of their children and their health,” he said. “With the income that the population [some of them] received from the sale of their products, they are improving their houses.”

The integration of an ally such as Analpes allowed populations to leverage funds valued at 1.5 million USD and not only increase the production of shiringa (natural leather), farm fish, native cacao, and poultry, but also the number of beneficiary families while giving financial sustainability to the co-management structure that had been strengthening. “In our case, the conditions were met,” said Salvador Morales, a representative of Analpes, “in ten months, we have achieved results.”

Regarding the co-management structure, Suwep said, “The ECA Tuntanain president, in coordination with the Local Sernanp head, seeks and manages more projects with the help of allies for the benefit of the population.” Moreover, he has seen that the Local Sernanp does more coordination activities, “The head [of Local Sernanp] does many procedures and coordinates with different public and private entities,” he said.

In terms of strengthening human capital, forty members of the local population composed by ECA Tuntanain and Local Sernanp members, local authorities, and Indigenous communities, received training in business plan development. In addition, 25 Indigenous leaders received leadership training to improve their roles in their communities. Likewise, park rangers

received training to expand their role beyond controlling illegal activities to promoting sustainable productive activities.

These results helped the co-management structure no longer remain limited to a formal division of functions, but instead become a collaboration between two strengthened entities based on trust, each one with its own skills and resources, weaknesses and strengths. Those partners are better able to govern the communal reserve, address challenges, and identify joint work opportunities.

LESSON LEARNED

The experience in the Tuntanain Communal Reserve provides important lessons about making co-management between the government and local communities work in practice, beyond legal command. In particular, it is necessary to invest in trust-building with and between local actors using participatory incentive mechanisms, capacity building for empowerment and better performance, and consider the financial sustainability of interventions promoted.

Invest in building trust using participatory incentive mechanisms

It is important to invest time in building trust and commitment at different stages. During the planning process between the project members and stakeholders. James Leslie, UNDP advisor in Peru, said: “The trust process between social actors, the state, and us as a new international cooperative required time that we had not planned for adequately during the planning process of the project.” Also, between members of a co-governance structure and the beneficiary population. Tenorio said: “The most difficult thing has been for all people to understand how important it is to understand each other, [...] to walk in the same direction with the same commitment.” Tsajamain called such trust with the communities “basic.”

The use of participatory incentive mechanisms such as ACODES and PAES, allowed us to involve the population in conservation tasks and sustainable resources use, simultaneously. It also made it possible to improve the relationship between local communities and co-management members. Hernández said “[...] EBA Amazon project had other resources such as the PAES, workshops, the school for organizational leaders, and a diploma course that were

utilized as support resources for the communities conditioned on signing the agreements [ACODES]”.

In line with this, in a Sernanp publication¹⁵ on the performance of communal reserves in Peru, the following aspects were identified as areas to improve: communication, participation, decision-making processes, and coordination with local and national actors.

Emphasizes development and conservation message

According to Ukunchamu, once confidence is restored, leaders should place emphasis on the importance of talking “more” with the population to strengthen messages such as those about conservation and development. “Keep working on shiringa [Natural leather] activities because while you are using the resources, the forest is not affected,” he used to say to the communities.

Likewise, Nuning mentioned the role of the State to continue promoting sustainable activities such as shiringa. “The State should continue to provide technical assistance through the agricultural minister and forest programs [to use shiringa] because the communities have realized shiringa is profitable due to them taking advantage of the trees for about 3, 10 or 50 years, but they are still alive. In this way, we are conserving our forests.”

Monitoring productive activities with the local population

Although the productive activities component was not the focus of this case, it is not possible to completely separate both components. Since the agreements, capacity building efforts and financial sustainability actions had as transversal elements fish farming, native cacao, shiringa, and poultry activities. With awareness of that in mind, this case has collected some lessons learned to take into account in similar processes.

To facilitate the coordination and monitoring of the development of productive activities, it is important to involve the high authority of the Indigenous community. “APU as father of the community should always be present in meetings even if he does not produce from such activities.” Ukunchamu said, “without him we cannot work.” In particular, the presence of the authority is a factor that helps in the accountability of the activities committed by the population.

¹⁵ Sernanp (2016). Modelo para orientar la Co-Gestión hacia la conservación y el desarrollo sostenible de una región con reserva communal

Moreover, choose one producer representative in each community to help in the coordination and monitoring of tasks, “I arrived and coordinated with the local representative and he organizes quickly,” Ukunchamu said.

Also, to minimize travel costs in remote areas with difficulty of geographic access, the team suggests clustering productive activities in coordination with communities. Tsajamain said: “That helps you cut costs, time and improve results.”

Capacity building for better performance

For an entity to take responsibility for managing resources, it must have adequate technical and administrative support. In spite of the project providing local administrative specialists, these were not enough. “The most difficult part of the process has been the implementation of the micro-grant because ECA Tuntanain did not have experience,” Tsajamain said. However, Local Sernanp was a key support for ECA Tuntanain along the implementation of the strengthening component based on a relationship of trust that was built in this period.

A ‘learning by observing’ strategy, as well as having a mix of foreign and local experts, and internships, was important to strengthening the technical skills of local actors. Tuyas, a park ranger said, “so, I was able to strengthen, improve, and update my knowledge about the fish farm.” As a result, after 2017, park rangers not only handled control and surveillance of the communal areas, but also played a key role in sensitizing and monitoring the productive activities in charge of the communities defined in the ACODES and PAES.

The mix of foreign and local expertise not only benefited the park rangers in terms of learning and improvement of their technical skills but also made easier the expert’s work due to, for instance, translation work carried out by the park rangers.

Ensure project sustainability through empowering implementation team and financing

It is key to training and empowering personnel who will sustain work even after projects end. They should know the local context well. Tsajamain said: “The park rangers are the key piece [because] ... they are the ones who are going to stay [and] they know the territory. ... They must be trained and empowered at work.” After the process of empowering, the park rangers know their functions are not limited only to control and surveillance. Quraco said, “Once the ECA Tuntanain and Sernanp manage a project to benefit the community located in the buffer zone of

the communal reserve, then we do the follow-up.” Also, Tuyas said, “We continue to strengthen productive activities in the communities once a project is completed.”

Once project resources run out, to sustain the agreements [ACODES] is important to ensure a flow of resources to sustain the fulfillment of commitments. In that context, Hernández considered “fundamental” the role of the leveraged external national funds, which was made possible with the hiring of the consortium. Also, Tenorio called that hiring the “key” for financial sustainability because it leveraged external national funds for promoting productive activities that directly benefited local populations as well as environmental conservation. Morales of Analpes advised: “If you have a financial sustainability strategy on a project, you should not establish it at the end but in the middle or a little earlier in the life of a project, so that you have enough time to think about much more long-term strategies.”

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