

Integral Approach to Capacity Building for Amazon rainforest conservation

Gail Hochachka
Drishti - Centre for Integral Action
BC Canada
gail@drishti.ca

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Abstract

The field of international sustainable development attempts to address a constellation of interpenetrating development challenges—such as, poverty alleviation, policy reform, and environmental degradation—with an array of methods and interventions, of which often capacity development is paramount. However, capacity development was not always emphasized in international development practice, and has more recently been understood to be of central importance in fostering sustainability in situations of large-scale environmental change. With challenges today, like climate change adaptation and other widespread environmental stressors, communities and organizations will need more overall capacity to respond and new frameworks through which to approach development. This article reviews the previous and current approaches to capacity development, outlining an integral approach to building “soft” and “hard” capacities. Particularly, the article explains how two Canadian NGOs—One Sky - Canadian Institute for Sustainable Living and Drishti - Centre for Integral Action—have been using the Integral Approach to capacity development with Peruvian partner NGO ACCA (*Asociacion para la Conservacion de la Cuenca Amazonica*) to enhance effectiveness of conservation efforts and sustainable livelihoods in the Amazon rainforest watershed near Cusco, Peru.

Key words: Amazon rainforest conservation, capacity building, capacity development, sustainable development, Integral applications, Integral Theory, environmental change, climate change, Peru, community engagement.

Capacity Development in Sustainable Development

In times of rapid and pervasive environmental change, the human capacity to respond and adapt effectively is of utmost importance. Reviewing the historical trends in capacity development for sustainability, this paper suggests that “human capacity” includes many forms and operates at several scales. That is, for example, the hard capacity of technical know-how with the soft capacity of interpersonal collaboration and self-awareness, as well as the individual-, project-, and organizational-scales of engagement. Taking a wider, deeper view of capacity development that includes individuals and collectives, as well as the interior and exterior types of capacity, the paper presents an integral approach to capacity development and discusses a case study that applies this approach in Amazon rainforest conservation in Peru. The paper concludes with some key characteristics of an integral capacity development, situating this in response to global environmental change.

Historical Trends

Studies and practical experience increasingly find that *capacity development* is one of the cornerstones for ensuring the viability of sustainable development projects. How capacity development has been engaged in the field has changed over time, shifting with the maturing of experience in addressing global issues. Historically, little attention was brought to this aspect of international development practice, with the primary focus being on inputs such as new equipment, infrastructure, and technology. Gradually, it became apparent that these alone would not create lasting change and stimulate development. Rather, development efforts should include an emphasis on “capacity building” of the beneficiaries of development aid. Eventually the term “capacity building” was critiqued as being too instrumental, constructing and building the capacity of others, “one brick on top of another,” and the term was adjusted to “capacity development.”

Capacity development better reflects the actual way that capacity arises, namely through learning, growth, and change across multiple intelligences and across various new skills, competencies, and know-how. Capacity development has been engaged in numerous ways ever since, from major investments in personnel development and provision of university-level education for developing country nationals, to shorter-term technical training and workshops, to collaborative research projects and networks (Horton, et al. 2003, pp. 49-50).

However, each of these trends in capacity development offer something particular and important for sustainable development. For example, at times, skills training on how to operate a solar panel, is needed to build capacity in a more instrumental manner, teaching the step-by-step process for how to run this sustainable energy system. At other times, however, a series of workshops over multiple years that engage a new social discourse about gender equity, for example, develops the capacity for individuals and organizations to include gender mainstreaming across the organization.

With just these two examples, it is evident that no “one size fits all” approach exists to capacity development. Capacity development is carried out at different scales (such as, within an organization and across a program area), focuses on different thematic areas

(eg., knowledge sharing, technical transfer, or empowerment), engages different participants (eg., staff of organizations or local beneficiaries), along different timelines (eg., short timelines for technical skills training, or longer timelines for awareness-raising and culture shifts). Some interventions seek to “build capacity” in a more constructive and technical sense; others take a more holistic approach that recognizes the dynamic process of “developing capacity” over time and by engaging various types of skill-sets and intelligences.

This is explained succinctly in IDRC’s *Evaluating Capacity Development*, (Horton, et al., 2003, p 49):

Early attempts (to deliver capacity development programs) focus on ‘hardware’, such as the construction of facilities and the provision of basic equipment. Technical advisors from the North are often sent to lead capacity development programs in the South. Later on, capacity development efforts shifted to focus on ‘software’ including staff knowledge, skills, and attitudes.

The authors go on to describe how capacity development needs to move on from a *traditional* to a more *holistic approach*, explaining that the limitations of the traditional approach include focusing on individuals or projects such that the “big picture” is missed and placing trained individuals in contexts that are not conducive to their new knowledge, skills, and attitudes (pp. 53-54). The main limitation identified in this book cited above is essentially that the capacity development focus on individuals and projects assumes incorrectly that the organization as a whole would in turn benefit. Horton et al. (2003, pp 50-64) thus design their “holistic” approach to first consider the whole organization’s capacity building needs and the organization taking ownership of its own capacity development initiative.ⁱ The traditional and holistic approaches described by Horton et al (2003) to capacity development are depicted in figures 1 and 2.

Integrating Soft and Hard Capacities

Horton et al (2003) build on previous approaches that worked with individual- and project-scale capacity development to include a focus on the whole organization’s capacity. In addition to this inclusion of both the *individual and collective domains* of capacity building, more recent capacity development approaches have also sought to integrate the *soft and hard capacities* (figure 3). This has been termed *integral capacity development*, based on applying quadrants of Integral Theory to capacity development.ⁱⁱ

In recent years, social change organizations working in community development and contributing to international development have demonstrated practical uses of this approach. An integral capacity development approach is being used by several agencies, in many different contexts both local, national, and global, including the BC Healthy Communities (BCHC) in Canada, Centro Bartolome de las Casas (CBC) in El Salvador, and the United Nations Development Program, HIV/AIDS Group, Bureau for Policy Influence in a Leadership For Results (L4R) programme in over forty countries.

BCHC developed and uses an integral capacity building approach in all health regions of the province of British Columbia, Canada, in an effort to acknowledge and develop the

multiple skill-sets and intelligences required for overall community well-being (see figure 4a). CBC uses an integral approach in a post-conflict setting, to inform and guide its way of working to reduce domestic violence and gender inequality and to develop capacity in rural communities in El Salvador (see figure 4b). Both organizations have seen key breakthroughs when using this approach to capacity development in a community development context.

The UNDP HIV/AIDS Group's L4R Programme included a *Community Capacity Enhancement Programme* in which an Integral Framework was part of the approach to enhance the capacity of leaders regarding HIV/AIDS (Gueye, Diouf, Chaava, Tiomkin, 2005, pp. 33-34). Community leaders in those countries now use an Integral Approach to develop community capacity and facilitate changes in mindsets, behaviours, cultural norms, and systems regarding HIV/AIDS, environmental degradation, and other development challenges (Figure 4c). The use of an Integral Framework in these aspects of UNDP HIV/AIDS Group's *Leadership for Results Programme* is now documented in *Mainstreaming HIV and AIDS in Sectors & Programmes An Implementation Guide for National Responses* (World Bank, UNDP and UNAIDS, pp. 105-112).

In the arena of organizational capacity development, an article published in CCIC's *Au Courant* (Fall 2005, p 6-9) explains succinctly:

An Integral Approach includes and transcends any single method of inquiry to create a *comprehensive map of human capacities*. This map includes both individual and collective realms, different ideas about evolution or change over time (for example, from psychology or social theory), different lines of development (such as moral, physical or cognitive development), and different ways of knowing (forms of consciousness). (Italics added.)

The Canadian NGO One Sky, over its nine years of development work in West Africa and Latin America, has increasingly come to recognize a need for hard and soft capacity-building. Explained in a recent newsletter article:

From a previous four-year project with five Nigerian NGOs in sustainability and poverty alleviation, One Sky began to see that Right-hand quadrant interventions (such as organizational development, financial management, improved communications, and policy influence), while critically important, could not be held in place without more Left-hand quadrant interventions (such as personal leadership, self-awareness, moral intelligence, and interpersonal skills). Or, put simply: the complex array of sustainable development issues in Nigeria, requires leaders with the mindset, values, and competencies that can fully understand and respond to that complexity.ⁱⁱⁱ

Building on the work in integral capacity development of these forerunners and its own field experience, One Sky is now attempting to include *all quadrants* in its capacity development project in Peru. This document explains the use of integral capacity development with One Sky's Peruvian partner ACCA and its subsequent engagement in

community conservation work, and ends with a discussion on some of the central characteristics of this approach.

Case Study: Integral Capacity Development in Peru

In the next section, I showcase a case study on how two organizations—One Sky-Canadian Institute for Sustainable Living and Drishti - Centre for Integral Action—have been using the Integral Approach to capacity development for increasing the effectiveness of Peruvian partner NGO ACCA's (*Asociacion para la Conservacion de la Cuenca Amazonica*) conservation work in the Amazon rainforest watershed near Cusco, Peru.

Background

The Canadian NGO One Sky-The Canadian Institute for Sustainable Living has used an Integral Approach to capacity development in their three-year CIDA Voluntary Sector Fund project in Peru, with a capacity development focus on the Peruvian partner organization, *Asociacion para la Conservacion de la Cuenca Amazonica* (ACCA). One Sky's baseline assessment oriented their approach in all four quadrants, each with one or two areas of focus resulting in six intermediate outcomes for the project. In the first year, Drishti - Centre for Integral Action did a comprehensive needs assessment with ACCA to assist One Sky in directing its capacity development efforts. Later, with funding from Canada's International Development Research Centre (IDRC) Drishti conducted action research with One Sky and ACCA staff that identified other important *outcomes* for integral capacity development.

Assessing Capacity Needs

The baseline assessment elucidated that the primary challenge that ACCA was facing in 2007 was lack of community engagement, and knowledge on the associated 'human dimensions' of working with communities. Steve Panfil, ACCA's former Executive Director, explained that the original approach implemented by ACCA towards forest conservation was to buy land and set up a research station. The organization was very fortunate with their first Conservation Concession^{iv} called Los Amigos, possibly due to a deep commitment at higher political levels, a small population living in the area, and less organized communities in the region. However, in the Cusco region, this land-purchase approach toward conservation became "an immediate mess, due to corruption and land conflicts" (Panfil, personal communication, June 2007).

Both Panfil and the next executive director, Cesar Moran-Cahusac explained that challenges existing today are still a result of these initial land conflicts. Other staff and personnel in the qualitative interviews of the baseline assessment echoed this perspective: the Cusco region requires staff with the capacity to work with social issues, to use social methodologies for community engagement, and with an understanding and awareness of local worldviews. The department of Cusco in Southeastern Peru is home to a complex array of cultures including lowland and highland Queros as well as traditional Quechua, modern colonists as well as emerging land owning tourism operations. During the time of

the baseline assessment, the organization as a whole was poised to diversify their staff to include more social science disciplines that complement forest ecology and biology.

With this larger context and primary challenge as the backdrop, the baseline assessment lead to a more comprehensive understanding of the strengths, assets, and areas for growth in ACCA, depicted in figure 5. In understanding these existing assets and areas of potential growth more fully, we could identify outcomes for the integral capacity development program.

Interventions in Integral Capacity Development

Over the next 2 years, One Sky carried out various interventions that sought to develop capacity in the key soft and hard domains of engagement, with both individuals and the organization as a whole. These are listed here and explained in further detail below:

- **On-going workshops in Integral Theory:** providing knowledge on the integral framework and how to use it to carry out analysis of issues, and for project planning, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation.
- **Specific workshops:** on participatory methodologies, understanding worldviews, and gender awareness and protocols.
- **Strategic Planning Session:** which set in motion a series of further detailed, comprehensive planning sessions across the organization's three offices (two in Peru, one in Bolivia).
- **Integral Curriculum Design for Guide Training:** A specific training program using an integral curriculum design in both hard and soft skills for local guides for the canopy walkway, as part of a larger initiative for sustainable livelihoods for rural communities.
- **Funded Community Promoters for Conservation and Forest Management:** This was part of a collaboration between the Huachapaire indigenous community and ACCA, and resulted in one of Peru's first ever conservation concessions to be managed by an indigenous community.

Updating one's framework to stretch across disciplinary boundaries is often needed when practitioners engage in complex issues. In the case of ACCA staff, the objective of rainforest conservation where communities derive their livelihood from the forest, staff needed to include more in the framework than could be found with a single discipline. That is, forest conservation is highly important, but alone is insufficient. Similarly, community engagement skills are highly important, but alone are insufficient. Rather, a framework that can bring these together allows for a more accurate understanding of the whole situation as well as provides the associated methodologies to engage all aspects of that situation.

The first set of workshops carried out by One Sky consisted of introducing ACCA staff to the quadrants of Integral Theory as a way to analyze and understand the complexity of the issues and projects they were working on, and to surface the myriad factors contributing to the issue. ACCA staff then used Integral Theory to assess gaps in their existing approaches and include new methodologies to arrive at a more comprehensive response. See figure 6a-c. A critical learning outcome was the mapping of perspectives

using a clear, easily understood methodology such that different cosmologies or worldviews could be systematically accounted for.

These workshops also provided a reflective space that can be referred to as 'psychoactive.' That is, the very process of coming together to take new perspectives and think deeply on such topics, also gave rise to an on-going process of reflection regarding which quadrants were included or left out in the regular daily operations in the ACCA office and projects.

In September 2007, a three-day workshop was held on how to use participatory methodologies and understand different worldviews. Engaging different groups on a shared issue or project can often be one of the most challenging aspects of a project, with multiple perspectives and interests not always readily aligning. Learning social methodologies for effective multi-stakeholder processes are important, but the methods alone are often not enough. Important too is the authentic acknowledgement that a groups' interest is informed by their tradition and cultural identity and intimately connected to their worldview. The integral capacity building approach sought to both introduce and practice participatory methodologies for engaging collaboratively as well as to learn about and become familiar with the nature of worldviews and cultural identity. The workshop included experiential learning (such as role plays), didactic lectures and presentations, as well as extensive small group work, so to effectively include the multiple intelligences of individuals (i.e. cognitive, emotional, interpersonal) as well as to account for different learning styles in the group.

Two months later, One Sky helped to facilitate a Strategic Planning Session, which set in motion a series of further detailed, comprehensive planning sessions over the next several months with all three of the organization's offices (Cusco and Puerto Maldonado in Peru, and the third in Bolivia). In March 2008, focus groups, reflective exercises and further workshops on Integral Theory, were conducted all directed toward the initial all-quadrant outcomes. September 2008, a gender analysis was carried out with ACCA staff, including a gender awareness workshop and discussion to establish preliminary protocols for gender equality policies within the organization.

In 2008/2009 One Sky assisted in designing a guide-training program to complement a canopy construction project using an integral methodology. In a graphic illustration of the need to integrate social and psychological aspects alongside physical infrastructure development, One Sky worked with a Canadian Conservation company, Greenheart, to engage local Queros communities during the construction of an aluminum jungle canopy walkway. Rather than just train guides in canopy maintenance and ecotourism, the guide training included thematic topics such as self-esteem, gender relations, intercultural understanding, and self-empowerment.

Throughout, One Sky held the meta-perspective of how these specific interventions synergistically contribute to ACCA's overall effectiveness for sustainability in the Cusco region of rainforest conservation in the headwaters of the Amazon.

Results to Date

On the whole, ACCA has shifted its approach in the Cusco region substantially since 2007, likely due in part to the integral capacity development. With a history of seven years of pure conservation science in the Los Amigos region of Bolivia, the organization's leadership has looked back and examined the conditions under which this approach worked. They found that it was likely successful because the region is isolated and communities in the vicinity are not organized. Attempting to apply the same approach in the Kosnipata region near Cusco, ACCA's work was met with opposition from communities. After a two-year integral capacity development project with One Sky and Drishti, and with a lot of field experience with participatory work in the Cusco region, today, ACCA's approach in the Kosnipata region is clearly one of collaborative community engagement. Says Executive Director, Cesar Moran-Cahusac, "We're shifting you see, looking more to the social, integral approach in the region." (Personal communication, January 2009).

Much of this change in approach is due to a unique set of conditions that have arisen since project inception. The timing of the integral capacity development programming coincided well with the organizational needs at the time. ACCA recognized that it needed to change organizational culture, and was helped to do this by learning new tools, building new capacities, exploring their own awareness and understanding, and embedding their work in a new framework.

In this section, three key results are discussed: improved community engagement, increased understanding about community worldviews, and improved organizational culture in the Cusco office. While there were other results during this time period, these three relate directly with the 'gaps' or needs discovered in the initial baseline assessment. Some of these results originated from ACCA's experience working in the region, while others were due to the integral capacity building of the One Sky project. More likely however, these results arose from an interaction of many interrelated factors that came together at this particular time (i.e. affinity for change in ACCA, interest for collaboration in communities, new legal instruments for conservation, available funding, as well as One Sky's capacity building project). While a clear cause-effect relationship is difficult to find, the following three results have, nevertheless, occurred over the time of ACCA and One Sky's partnership project in the Cusco region.

Improved Community Engagement

One of the key results to date has been the impact of ACCA taking up a more expanded and inclusive approach to the conservation and community engagement work they do in the Cusco region. In April 2007, ACCA was practically kicked out of the Kosnipata region near the Manu Biosphere Reserve, about 10 hours from Cusco, and a year later signed a Conservation Concession entitled, "*Reserva Ecológica Huachipaire Haramba Queros*" with the Queros Native Community (CNQ) in their name. For ACCA to have arrived at this, from having such a negative public image in that region and from having a primarily scientific approach to conservation, is evidence of a dramatic shift in approach how they now engage with the Queros community. The concession is legally in the name of the CNQ, a first in Peru with an indigenous community, and one of the first in the world that employs this modality of land management.

Conservation concessions are a recent legal instrument for ecosystem conservation and sustainable management. With ACCA and CNQ, the fundamental objective for establishing this concession is oriented to developing conservation projects for biodiversity, to sustain threatened species and fragile habitats, as well as maintaining environmental services. However, there is also a strong community development aspect to this, as well as acknowledging and conserving cultural diversity of the Huachapaire indigenous people. It is hoped that the concession will support the community by giving opportunities to students, researchers and other authorities to develop environmental education programs, raise awareness about conservation, sustainably manage the natural resources to improve the productive capacity in the community, and minimize negative social or environmental impacts.

During the action research, all of the focus groups described a shift occurring within ACCA toward a greater equality and participatory process between ACCA and communities (figure 7.) This five-diagram model was used in the focus groups to engage a discussion on ACCA's previous, current, and future capacity and attitude for participating with communities. The participants of each focus group independently arrived at the same conclusion: that ACCA's current way of engaging the community was shifting positively away from a more exclusive agenda toward a more participatory approach.

Says Luis Ponce, Coordinator of Forestation and Reforestation at ACCA:

Regarding the Queros concession, this gives me a lot more confidence and trust in ACCA. Those brothers can give their input and skills to this concession. This is a lot of work in this project [and knowing they will be involved] helps me; it strengthens my own work.

His reflections on this underline the strength of collaboration for more effective conservation efforts.

Increased Understanding of Community Worldview

ACCA has been developing social diagnostic tools to use with communities, to have a more comprehensive sense of community needs and to define appropriate intervention strategies. This includes being attentive to local worldviews. It has also meant using new methodologies and approaches that are more anthropological to complement the more ecological methodologies used by the organization. These include, carrying out open-ended interviews, questionnaires, and a focus group using Rapid Rural Appraisal.

This socialization process—spending time with community people, doing one-on-one interviews and holding group discussions—as well as reviewing carefully the results of the social diagnostic with the community—has given rise to a truly participatory process. The community has revised the social diagnostic, improved on aspects of it, and self-identified and validated the information presented, recognizing their own strengths and weaknesses.

Another way that ACCA included and strengthened this aspect of its programming was by hiring personnel with particular skills in psychology, cultural studies, and anthropology, including Quechua indigenous people and Quechua-speaking staff, into the organization's team. This inclusion of the "soft" capacities gained through the hiring process, has assisted the organization better understand the worldviews of community people. This is often a valid and quick route to ensuring an organization's all-quadrant capacity: adding certain skillsets to job postings so to diversify the skillsets of team members, to broaden the organizations' capacity, and thus to increase its potential for impact.

Improved Organizational Culture

One of the results that emerged over the course of the integral capacity development was that the organizational culture of the ACCA office in Cusco became an exciting, innovative place to work. While surely any office undergoes challenging times, and the Cusco office has certainly seen their share of such challenges, even so, compared to the rest of ACCA, something is clearly working in Cusco.

In an informal way, the other ACCA Peruvian office, in Puerto Maldonado, became a control group, having not received any such workshops or trainings. To date, the Cusco office, while doing temporarily less well financially due to several projects drawing to completion at the same time, has been found to be doing very well in terms of the organizational culture, interpersonal dynamics and general awareness of staff. The Executive Director and other personnel from the Washington D.C. office have noted the need to carry out a similar set of workshops on Integral Theory, a needs assessment and series of integral capacity development workshops in the Puerto Maldonado office, based on how valuable it was in Cusco. (Amy Rosenthal personal communication, June, 2009)

Staff in the Cusco office reflects on the positive impact of the organizational changes and how that in turn has resulted in increased effectiveness in communities. Aldo, the Coordinator of the micro-enterprise projects explains,

Yes, I've seen changes [over these two years]... We are working more as a team, rather than each separately working on their own... We know the collective objectives, and can "talk the same language" with these shared activities. This has definitely optimized the work activities. First, in efficiency; two, in institutional resources... Benefits have obviously transferred to our target groups and beneficiaries, because in a single meeting, we can carry out several activities at the same time, versus having the communities wait for each separate person to arrive (anthropologist one day, forester the next), which tends to result in community people participating less.

Luis Ponce, Coordinator of Forestation and Reforestation, echoes this sentiment and adds further reflections on the usefulness of the Integral Framework:

Now our work is more integral in the communities. It feels like when we are planning a forestry project or micro-enterprise, one does not feel separate, one feels they are in a team. We have also gained more credibility in the communities,

which we formerly had lost. Also, we use the quadrants to plan activities, considering the exterior, interior, individual, collective.

He adds, “This understanding [of the quadrants] still needs to be strengthened more, to refresh our understanding of this” which echoes the iterative nature of integral capacity development. We cannot expect that capacities in all quadrants will be developed overnight, especially with the Left-hand quadrants of personal capacities and interpersonal capacities. This becomes truly a process, learning new frameworks, applying theory and methodologies in the field, and returning to deepen understanding by asking questions, reflecting on results, and sharing lessons learned. The nature of good pedagogy is iterative, alternating between action and reflection, such that both inform the other. This is one of the principles of an integral capacity development: that it engages an iterative, utilization-based, praxis-based, and developmental unfolding of learning.

While this is an on-going process in ACCA’s Cusco office, over these two years some remarkable impacts have been achieved, hinting at the potential of integral capacity development for addressing environmental change and sustainable development.

Discussion: Toward an Integral Capacity Development

The trends in capacity development in the larger field of international development depict a story of the maturing of experience towards more complex, comprehensive modes of developing capacity. Integral capacity development is a process in which individual and collective domains, as well as the interior capacities (soft skills) and exterior capacities (hard skills) are integrated into a single approach. An Integral Approach to capacity development engages its efforts in more domains of capacity than former approaches, with accordingly different objectives and methodologies.

Integral capacity development seeks to engage in increasing capacity across this spectrum of ways of being, ways of knowing, and ways of doing. For example, interventions in the Right-hand quadrants tend to engage ways of doing, such as skills training, technical transfer, and “hard” capacities, which can often take less time to develop. Interventions in the Left-hand quadrants engage in ways of knowing and ways of being, and contribute to building “soft” capacity for new social engagement, awareness, worldviews and values, which are more in-depth processes and inevitably operate on longer timelines.

While the intricacies of an Integral approach to capacity development are many, and are currently being engaged and worked out in the organizations listed in the introduction, the potential for an integral capacity development is one worth exploring seriously in the current global context. Unlike in previous generations where being trained in a single discipline put one in good stead for life; today, many of the global challenges we face involve interrelated domains of life that transcend single disciplines. Indeed, many of the global challenges today and in the future require new integrative competencies, mental models, and technical skills.

For a brief example, practitioners trained in conservation science need to draw on their particular training, as well as have some competency to work interpersonally with local

communities. This invariably brings in the subjective, interior dimension of life—such as worldviews, values and psychology. While those scientists need not specialize in these other human-related fields, they do have to have some familiarity with them—at least in order for their objectives in conservation science to stick. To date, an integral capacity development approach has been found to offer an exciting and important way for us to learn across disciplines and to develop our own capacities to meet the full complexity of global issues.

Here, the central features of an integral capacity development are discussed. Of these, quadrants seem most important to include, while lines and stages are also useful in a more sophisticated capacity building approach.

Quadrants

As mentioned in the text and depicted in the figures above, integral capacity development needs to address the soft and hard capacities of both individuals and groups. This includes (and is depicted in figure 8):

- *Self and experience* (spiritual assets, psychological health, consciousness)
 - *Capacity development as ‘developing the self’*
- *Physical health and Actions* (physiology, land-use practices, behaviors)
 - *Capacity development as ‘building skills’*
- *Culture and worldview* (social norms, values, shared worldviews, assumptions)
 - *Capacity development as ‘engaging cultures’*
- *Systems* (political, economic, judicial, social, and ecological systems)
 - *Capacity development as ‘influencing systems’*

The underlying theory here suggests that for change efforts to be successful, all four domains of change need to be involved. If there is emphasis placed on influencing systems, such as in studying ecosystem change or building new infrastructure systems for the community, yet other quadrants are left out, we cannot be certain that the cultural changes, behavioural changes, and personal changes will follow suit. Rather, these too must also be engaged to some extent. Integral capacity building seeks to provide the necessary support to social change agents to learn how to engage all four domains of change.

Each quadrant comes with its own specific tools to engage in learning and capacity building, all of which are a mix of first-person perspectives, second-person perspectives, and third-person perspectives. Some examples are provided in the following list:

- *Self and experience*: subjectivity, reflective exercises, self-observation, self-inquiry, surfacing assumptions.

- *Culture and worldview*: inter-subjectivity, taking multiple perspectives, conflict resolution, dialogue and small group discussions.
- *Physical health and Actions*: skills training, technical know-how, lectures, and hands-on learning.
- *Systems*: analyzing complex systems, strategic planning, group training on policy dialogue, engaging the system of the media, understanding and influencing markets.

Lines

The Integral Capacity development approach also recognizes that individuals have multiple intelligences that are relatively independent. These multiple intelligences can be called “developmental lines” as research has found these to be aspects of the self that grow and mature through life. One’s perspective-taking capacity (termed cognitive development by psychologists) usually precedes other intelligences and is important for other developmental lines like moral, emotional, and interpersonal intelligences to follow. That is, one’s own perspective-taking capacity discloses ‘what one is aware of,’ and based on what one is aware of, one can then extend moral consideration, emotional care, and other such intelligences.

In integral capacity development, working with multiple intelligences is important, since one intelligence alone is usually insufficient for capacity to be fully developed in a new domain of practice. For example, if only new technical know-how is provided for increased community engagement, but little focus brought to the ability to honor multiple perspectives (moral line) and increasing the social awareness (interpersonal line), then little will be gained, and vice versa. Bringing attention in capacity building efforts to several intelligences provides greater opportunities for comprehensive learning to result. Depending on the project and context, different lines will be important and a needs assessment or baseline assessment should be carried out prior to engaging any capacity development.

A practical and general way to engage multiple intelligences in a given capacity building initiative is to include didactic learning, such as lectures, presentations, slide shows, with discussions and small group work, as well as self-inquiry or reflection. This immediately engages participants’ cognitive intelligence, interpersonal intelligence, and self/moral intelligence—simply by the use of those three groupings of methodologies. This can also ensure that different learning styles are accounted for.

More specifically, certain exercises can be included for particular lines, such as complex problems to work with the cognitive line, role plays with multiple perspectives to work with the interpersonal line, and moral dilemmas for working with the moral line.

Stages

Finally, a third aspect of integral capacity development is to understand the stages of development through which humans grow. These *deep structures* of human interiors seem to be shared across cultures, whereas how they are surfaced differs diversely based on culture, background, and context. Working here with deep structures, we can see that every human from birth through adolescence to adulthood and old age progress through increasing degrees of awareness, self-identity, perspective-taking capacity, and moral care. How we think about, identify with, and care for global issues simply gets more complex as we grow; with little concern for such issues during childhood, increasing interest in adolescence, and often greater sophistication in later life. Drawing upon decades of research by developmental psychologists, Integral Theory gives a general description of four stages: ego-centric, to socio-centric, to world-centric, to kosmos-centric. Each stage has a different worldview (Wilber, 2006), action logic (Cook-Greuter, 1999), and meaning-making (Kegan, 1994).

The intricacies of this developmental psychology research is itself a huge area of discussion, that evades the space requirements for this paper. For now, the central take-away is that integral capacity development is oriented to *meet people where they are*. Without that, communication is literally at odds, and little effectiveness will result from the intervention. It helps to study the developmental research and frameworks to learn more about this. Other practical steps for meeting people where they are at include:

- Actively listen for meaning-making structure behind content of what is being communicated.
- Craft communications to meet that meaning-making structure or worldview.
- Create feedback mechanisms to ensure communications are landing, and that the process is serving people.

A final note here is that an integral capacity development initiative can integrate as much as it can at a given moment, beginning with quadrants, then considering lines and levels. It need not immediately include everything. Rather, it is best designed in direct connection with the local context, organization and project, offering what is most needed to respond to the current challenges. Here it is suggested that ‘soft’ and ‘hard’ capacities should be included as a minimum, with the more nuanced, further reaches of an integral capacity development beckoning into the future.

Conclusion

In sustainable development, practitioners are surely in the business of change. Often practitioners are seeking behavioural, social or political changes to address larger-scale environmental changes, such as, in the case of Peru, deforestation, loss of biodiversity, and climate change. Usually practitioners seek to effect systemic change, such as changes in institutions, land use practices, and governance processes. However, increasingly practitioners recognize that to support any such systemic changes, requires changes in mindsets, values, and consciousness. That is, why would someone change their land use practices, if they did not simultaneously also value the land and ecosystem differently? Or, for another example, why would a new institution and governance process, such as a

collaborative management of the forest ecosystem, take hold without the corresponding cultural buy-in and awareness that that manner of working is important?

With this in mind, one can see how when we engage in capacity development, it is never a simple “technical transfer;” rather it is a complex and intricate array of capacity development processes involving various dimensions of change. The more human dimensions of change are often referred to as “soft” capacities, with the technical capacities referred to as “hard” capacities. Different practitioners and organizations will foreground these capacities in lesser or greater degrees, some focusing more explicitly on the technological side and others increasingly on the human side.

In this project, two Canadian NGOs, One Sky and Drishti, sought to engage capacity development of both soft competencies and hard skills, by using the four quadrants of Integral Theory. The quadrants describe four domains of change that correspond with four irreducible aspects of reality, which can be explained as personal change (Upper Left), behavioural change (Upper Right), cultural change (Lower Left), and systemic change (Lower Right). The Integral approach acknowledges an evolutionary telos and grounds engagement in those domains in unique methodological families, each with their own corresponding validity claims. In this way, the Integral approach provides a rigorous framework for interventions, processes, and evaluation that can include the full detail and span of social change work in the face of immense environmental change.

Applied to capacity development, this entails a focus on self-development (UL), skills-building (UR), capacities to influence systems (LR), and capacities to engage different cultures (LL). Through a needs assessment, One Sky and ACCA discovered six key areas of focus that spanned all four quadrants. Monitoring the project after two years, we have found that, while this is a first attempt with integral capacity development and the results are preliminary, in several key areas ACCA’s work is more successful in 2009 than at the outset of the project in 2007. This is particularly the case in regards to community engagement, working with local cultures and worldview, and in its own organizational culture. This project suggested that there is a lot to be gained from this Integral capacity development in sustainability work.

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Figures

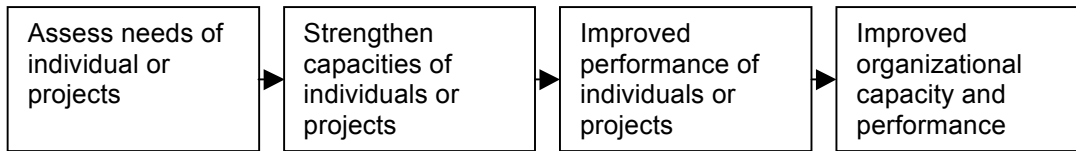


Figure 1: Underlying logic of the traditional, linear approach to capacity development, which assumes that the development of individual- and project-level capacities will lead to improved organizational capacity and performance. (Horton, et al. 2003, p. 52)

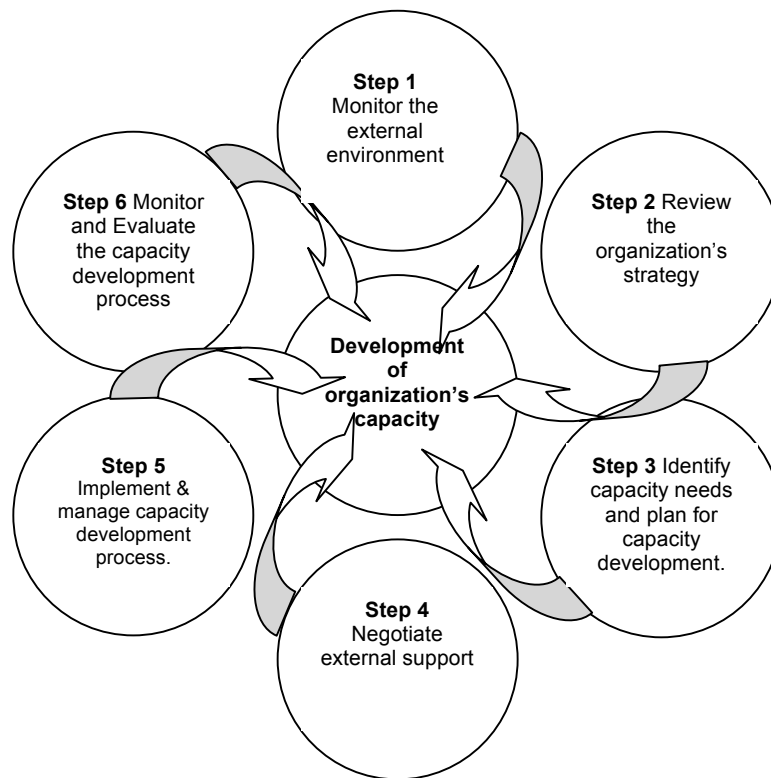


Figure 2: Steps in a holistic approach to capacity development, as depicted and explained in Horton, et al. 2003, p. 59), “The steps are presented in an ideal sequence. In practice, however, capacity development efforts often begin at different points in the sequence, skip steps, or cycle back and forth between steps.”

	Soft capacities	Hard capacities
Individual	<p>Individual, interior (self, awareness)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Empowerment. - Personal leadership. - Moral span. - Values. - Emotional intelligence. 	<p>Individual, exterior (behaviors, skills)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Particular practices and technical skills. - Tasks that contribute to organizational performance. - Technical know-how.
Collective	<p>Collective, interior (culture, worldview)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Interpersonal capacity. - Dialogue and listening capacities. - Social discourse and social methodologies. 	<p>Collective, exterior (systems)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Organizational systemic capacity, such as communication and financial systems. - Networking capacity - Capacity to engage strategic policy influence.

Figure 3: An Integral Approach to capacity development includes both the soft (interior) and hard (exterior) capacities of individuals and organizations, and some examples of what type of capacity building would be included. This figure is based on how Ken Wilber's Integral Theory has been applied to capacity development in projects lead by BC Healthy Communities, Centro Bartolome de las Casas in El Salvador, UNDP's HIV/AIDS Group's Leadership For Results, and One Sky's current work in Peru. All four quadrants, are co-arising simultaneously, each important to include in one's approach.

Upper Left quadrant Psychological and spiritual assets (healthy mind, healthy spirit)	Upper Right quadrant Physical and behavioral assets (healthy body, healthy actions)
Lower Left quadrant Cultural assets (healthy cultural values, beliefs and attitudes)	Lower Right quadrant Social and Ecological assets (healthy environment, social systems, policies, services)

Figure 4a: The Integral Approach of BCHC Capacity Building Framework (see: <http://www.bchealthycommunities.ca>, Retrieved May 2009)

Using subjective scripture methodologies to explore myths that religion validates gender violence. Taking perspectives of one's self; accessing new emotions, new potentials, and new sense of self. (e.g. drawing one's outline on a big sheet of paper, making it into the "ideal man" and then reflecting on whether that is, actually, who one is or even wants to be.)	Using competitive and cooperative games to understand one's behaviours and facilitate changes in behaviours. (e.g. using physical activity as a beginning point to feel competition and cooperation.)
<i>Masculinity Program</i>	
Group dialogue on social conditioning that influences the dynamics between men and women. (e.g. comparing ideal man with real person, and dialogue around how these are socially-constructed perspectives, that can also be un-learned.)	Facilitating changes in social system via fostering interior shifts in sense of self and behaviours. (e.g. participants analyse how violent behaviours influence the social system, and become aware how each person is, to a certain degree, able to influence the system by their own ways of being.)

Figure 4b: Salvadoran non-profit organization uses quadrants of Integral Approach to combine methodologies for its "Masculinities Program" that seeks to reduce gender inequality and violence against women.

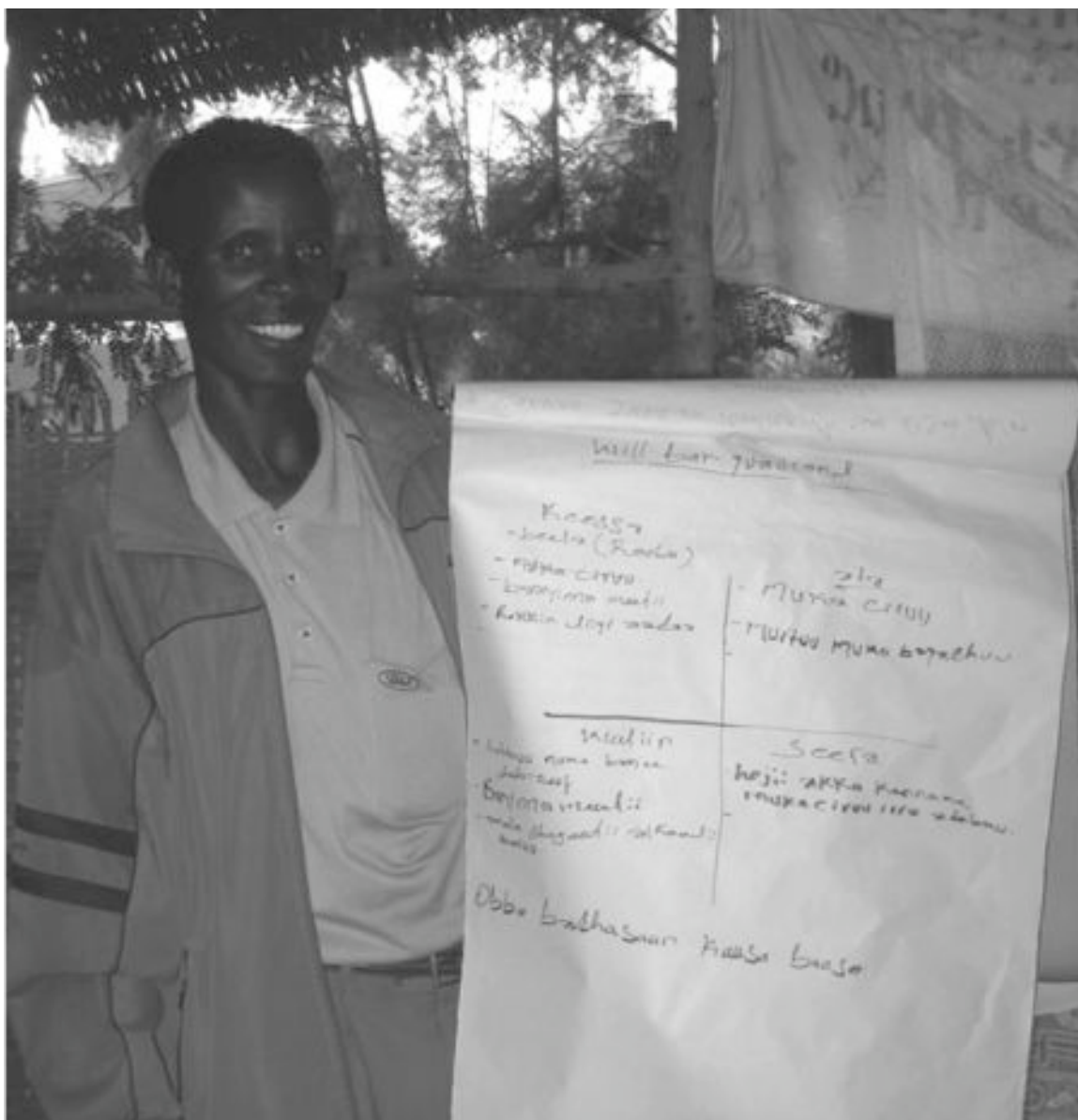


Figure 4c: A Community Facilitator, trained by Negash Shiferaw, a previous coach in UNDP’s HIV/AIDS Group’s *Leadership For Results Programme*, works with the integral approach with communities in the Zeeway Watershed in the Rift Valley of Ethiopia. The four quadrants are useful for communities to build capacity on how to understand and address environmental issues.

Figure 5: Mapping outcomes, based on the needs assessment and follow-up action research, to the four-quadrant domains of change as part of the first year of the integral capacity development. This enabled our research team to feed back and reflect these findings to One Sky and ACCA, and also to reveal any potential gaps in the outcomes sought. Through doing this, ACCA verified that indeed the LL quadrant was the weaker point in the organization, with attention needed in the UL as well, and One Sky clarified that improved technical capacity with strategic planning and networking were vital for ENGOs today.

		Soft capacities	Hard capacities
Individual		<p>Individual, interior (self, awareness)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Better understanding worldviews and engaging interior changes (such as awareness, attitudes, empowerment, sense of ownership, knowledge, values, and motivation). - Engender great trust and improve ACCA's image with communities and the public. 	<p>Individual, exterior (behaviors, skills)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improve capacity for strategic planning
Collective		<p>Collective, interior (culture, worldview)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improve internal organizational dynamics, internal communication, and reflective processes within ACCA. - Strengthen participation with communities and other actors, learning new social methodologies. - Develop gender awareness, and build capacity for Gender Mainstreaming across the organization and in programming with communities and the public. 	<p>Collective, exterior (systems)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improve capacity for networking with other organizations (locally, regionally, internationally). - Improved capacity to engage in municipal, national and international policy dialogues



Figure 6a: Discussing the complexity of rainforest conservation in terms of the quadrants, including self (Upper Left), culture (Lower Left), behaviours (Upper Right), systems (Lower Right).

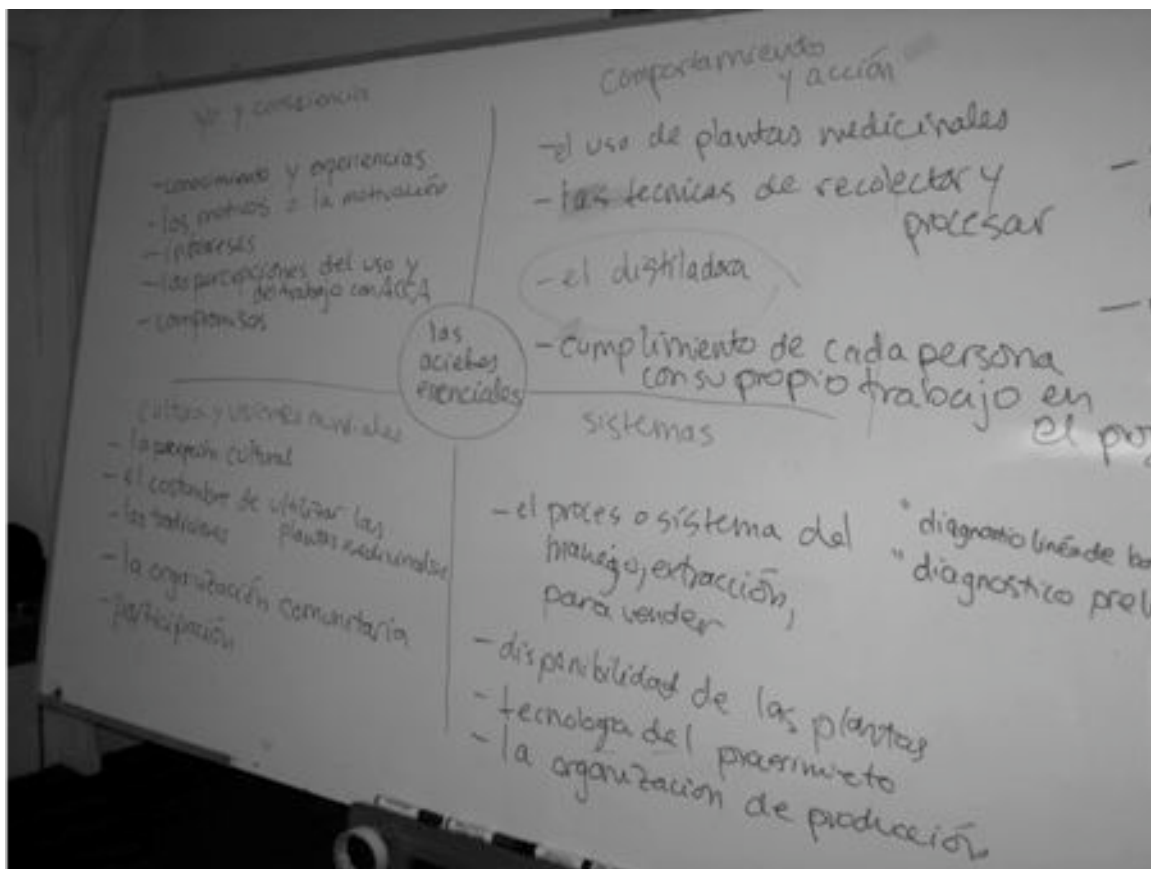


Figure 6b: Examining the incoming-generating project of essential oils carried out in Suchabamba community in the Andes near the cloud forest ecosystem, using the quadrants as a tool for analysis and planning.

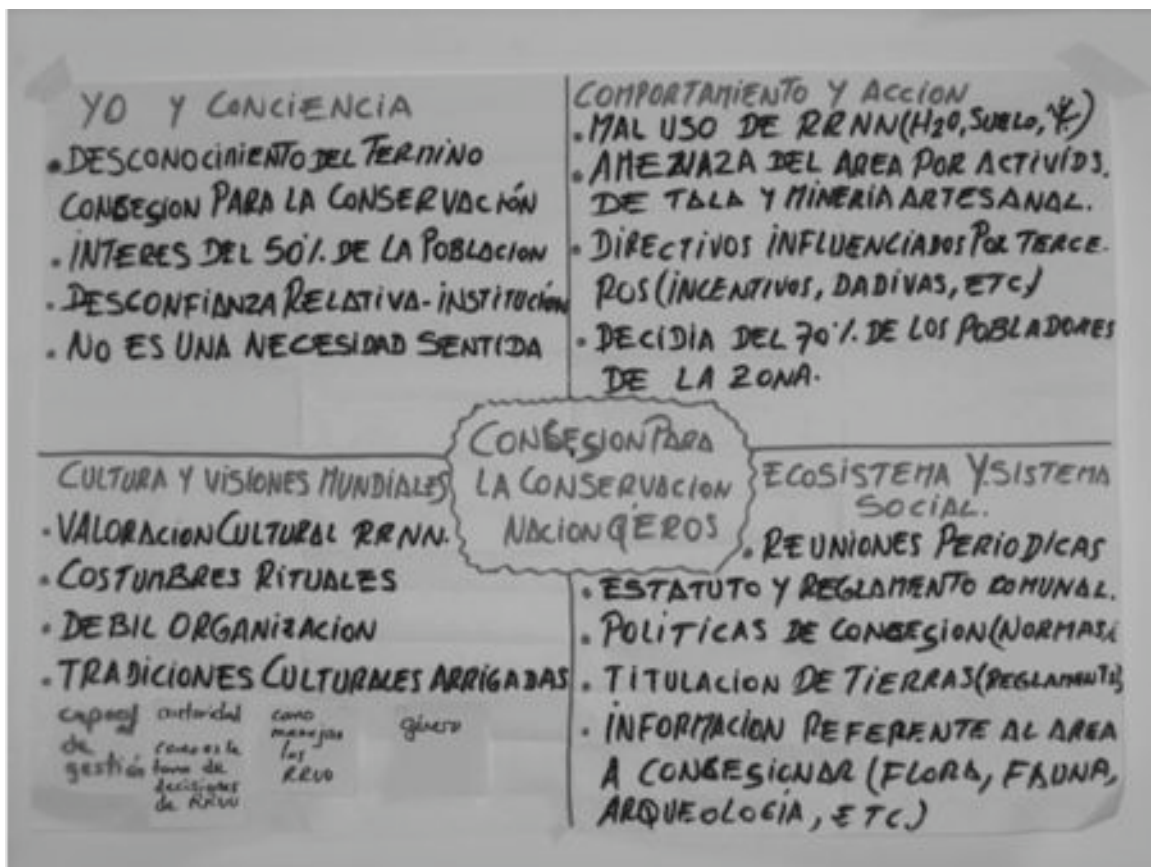


Figure 6c: Exploring the multiple factors that influence the success or limitations of ACCA’s work to secure a Conservation Concession with the Q’eros indigenous community, including self and consciousness (UL), culture and worldviews (LL), behaviours and actions (UR), social system and ecosystem (LR).

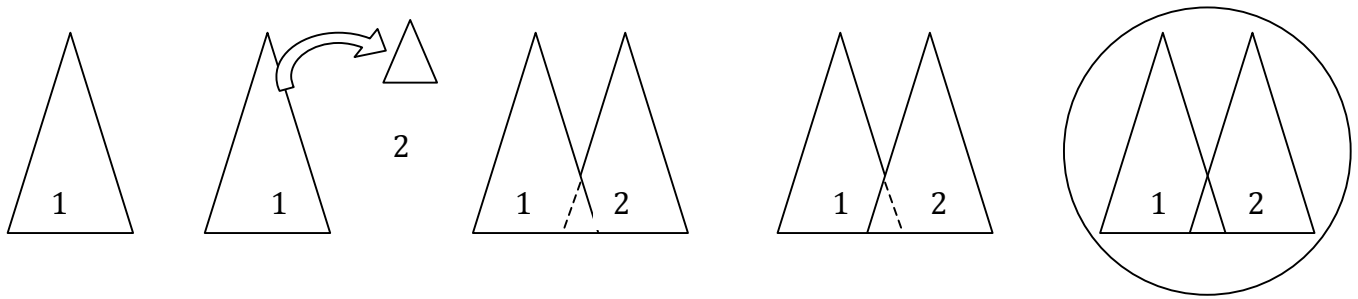


Figure 7: These triangles depict five ways to engage in participation (coming from different worldviews) between the organization (triangle 1) and the community (triangle 2). We presented these as horizontal types, although through the discussion participants themselves often said that they were in fact developmental stages. From left to right, following the terms used in Integral Theory for worldview, each is described by a sample quote that might issue from that stage: **magic worldview (egocentric)** (“my agenda/organization is the only one that counts”), **mythic worldview (ethnocentric)** (“our organization has the right way of doing things, but we’ll give hand-outs to the community”); **rational worldview (early worldcentric)** (“we can consider and appreciate the community has its own agenda, and we’ll engage in participation, but it is more consultation, since we really don’t give up much of our agenda, being as it is based on true expertise”); **pluralistic worldview (late worldcentric)** (“we so consider and appreciate the community’s agenda that we’ll give up our own; in fact, that itself becomes our agenda which is often implicitly imposed on the community”); **integral worldview (kosmoscentric)** (“we see that both the organization and the community have an agenda/perspective that is valid and that the shared terrain (small overlapping triangle) does not have to be the lowest common denominator, rather a wider, deeper perspective co-arises that neither individual entity can see on its own.”) This set of five diagrams was created by the Drishti research team and One Sky partners in a meeting in Cusco. It is based on our collective field experience as well as roughly based on a theory of types of participation. The typologies are listed here, with their links to our triangle model: passive participation (amber); participation in information giving (early orange); participation by consultation (orange); participation for material incentives (orange); functional participation (mature orange); interaction participation (green); self-mobilization (mature green) (Source: Pretty (1994) adapted from Adnan et al (1992)).

	Interior	Exterior
Individual	<p><i>Self and experience</i> (spiritual assets, psychological health, consciousness)</p> <p><i>Capacity development as ‘developing the self’</i></p>	<p><i>Physical health and Actions</i> (physiology, land-use practices, behaviors)</p> <p><i>Capacity development as ‘building skills’</i></p>
Collective	<p><i>Culture and worldview</i> (social norms, values, shared worldviews, assumptions)</p> <p><i>Capacity development as ‘engaging cultures’</i></p>	<p><i>Systems</i> (political, economic, judicial, social, and ecological systems)</p> <p><i>Capacity development as ‘influencing systems’</i></p>

Figure 8: The Four-Quadrants of Integral Capacity Development, One Sky and Drishti, 2007-2009.

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ⁱ The principles of a holistic approach to capacity development articulated in this book include: Take ownership of your organization's capacity development initiative; Focus on the needs and priorities of the organization as a whole; Management of capacity development processes is crucial for success; Prepare for monitoring and evaluation at the outset of a capacity development initiative; Capacity development is more than a one-off event; Engage stakeholders in the capacity development process; Cultivate political support; Preserve your autonomy; Establish an environment conducive to learning and change.

ⁱⁱ The Integral Approach is based on Ken Wilber's published works (1996, 2000, 2002, 2006).

ⁱⁱⁱ Integral Life Newsletter, "Leading From Within: Integral Applications to Sustainability in the Niger Delta" Downloaded: October 2008: <http://integrallife.com/company/leading-within-integral-applications-sustainability-niger-delta>

^{iv} Conservation concessions are legal instruments for extended leases on land that contribute to its conservation. Concessions are given for resource extraction, such as forestry, oil and gas, and mining.