Community-Led Learning

Innovative Best Practices for knowledge co-construction and braiding epistemologies

ANDEAN INITIATIVE

CIP INTERNATIONAL POTATO CENTER

CGIAR

cbc centro bartolomé de las casas

UNIVERSITY of GUELPH

UG OAC

SCHOOL OF ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

https://www.istockphoto.com/photos/andes-mountains

Presenters

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Senior Scientist,
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Dr. Timmi Tillmann

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Objectives & Agenda

20 mins

Understand Knowledge co-production

Dr. Silvia Sarapura, Charlotte Potter: Review the theoretical and academic foundations of knowledge integration and co-production between Indigenous and Western epistemologies

20 mins

Connect theory to practice

Timmi Tillmann: Strengthening local capacity through Participatory Action Research

20 mins

Case Study: The Andean Initiative

Stef de Haan: Scaling innovations and connective scientific institutions with Indigenous strategies

20 mins

Panel Discussion

Questions, discussion and comments from the audience

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Part 1
Integrating Indigenous Knowledge

Academic and Theoretical Foundations

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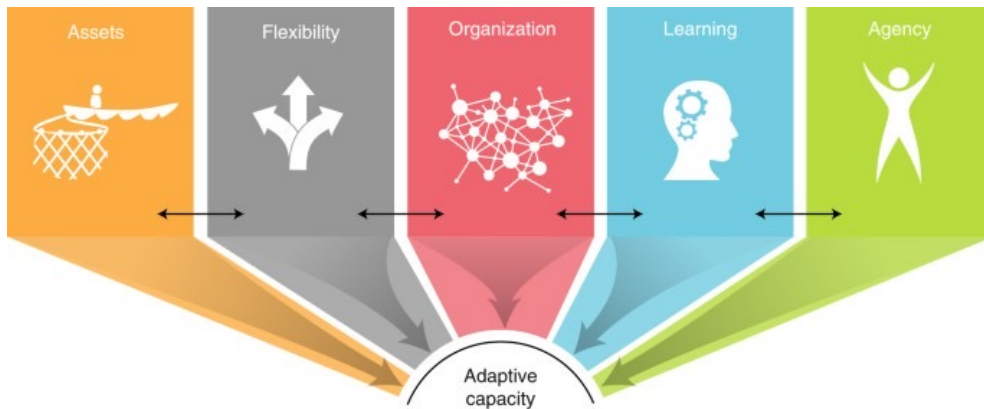**Presented by Dr. Silvia Sarapura and Charlotte Potter**

Indigenous climate vulnerability

- Communities who rely on local food systems for food security are most **vulnerable** to climate change

- **Vulnerability**: possibility of biodiversity, soil, water, productivity loss when faced with external shock or pressure (Altieri et al., 2015)

- **Climate change impacts**: Deforestation, land degradation, pollution, extraction

Adaptive Capacity

The 'potential or ability of a system, region or community to adapt to the effects or impacts of climate change" (IPCC 2001:877).

Fig. 1 | Five domains of adaptive capacity to climate change: assets, flexibility, social organization, learning and agency
Cinner et al., 2018

Exclusion

Systematic exclusion from social, political, economic systems impact community access to climate-adaptive technology and resources (SOURCE)

Adaptation

Leverage ecosystem services and local knowledge systems to adapt to changing climates, harsh conditions (SOURCE)

Social-Ecological Context

Social-ecological knowledge enables the continuous survival and adaptation of communities over generations
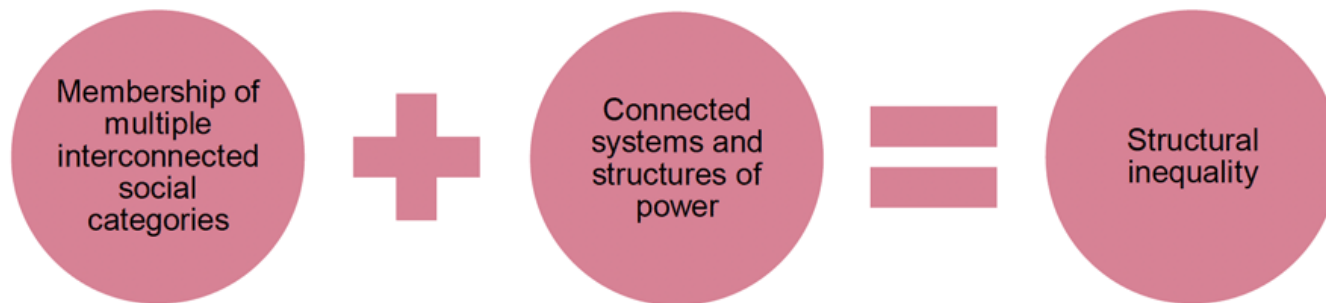
Situated Knowledge

- **Localized knowledge** evolved to be suited and adapted to social-ecological context

- **Embodied** through access and interaction with the land and landscape

- **Sustainability** of Indigenous systems hinges on access to land, biodiversity and natural resources

Intersecting vulnerability

"The way in which someone experiences a disadvantage is inevitably determined by the other disadvantages they suffer from. Intersecting vulnerabilities therefore tend to create hardships that are far greater than the sum of each factor"
(Vasquez et al., 2021:620)

Fig 2 | Diagrammatic representation of the relationship between the key tenets of intersectionality
Scottish Government, Riaghaltas na h-Alba, 2022

Positionality

Different people experience different levels of vulnerability based on their unique, multiple, intersecting social identities which constrain or enable their access to resources

Diversity

Diverse individuals, groups, and communities will have different experiences, needs, and climate vulnerabilities

Contextuality

Policy and programming must consider how multiple, diverse groups will be affected to avoid exacerbating inequality

Land & Resources

- **Indigenous knowledge** and research methods are firmly embedded in worldviews, history and life experiences

- Knowledge is generated in the **context** of peoples lives, livelihoods
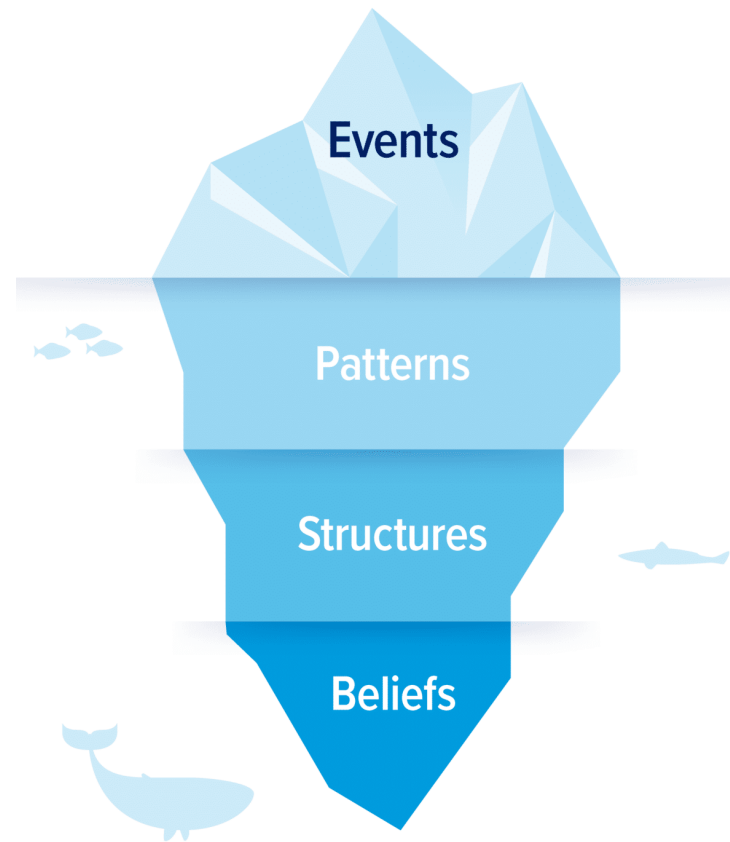
- It is **dynamic** and contextual

How can we work with communities to give voice and agency to their food and knowledge systems?

Collaboration & Ownership

Participatory, collaborative, reflexive research opens up spaces for new ideas and strategies; using local knowledge to address localized problems from global issues

Events

Patterns

Structures

Beliefs

Fig 3 | Systems Iceberg – Knowledgeworks.org
Katie King, 2022

Collaboration

Active, full partnership, collaboration, ownership by groups in research, policy, programming to flatten power hierarchies and co-construct goals, objectives

Reflexivity

Process of examining our beliefs, ideas, motivations to understand how they influence action

Systems Thinking

How are people, places, and processes related to each other; and how do global actions impact local actors?

Part 2
Connecting Theory to Practice

Strengthening capacity through Participatory Action Research

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Presented by Dr. Timmi Tillmann

Intercultural Methodologies

Develop alternatives based on local knowledge and *cosmovision*; through co-creation and collective action

Multiple Voices, alternative visions

Acknowledging diverse knowledge systems in a diversity of landscapes and listening to voices, visions of communities and elders

Local wisdom

Visualize local wisdom and make cultural identities and livelihoods visible

Rights-based approach

Ensuring the right to language, culture and knowledge, control of resources, biodiversity and land, and self-determination, participation and empowerment

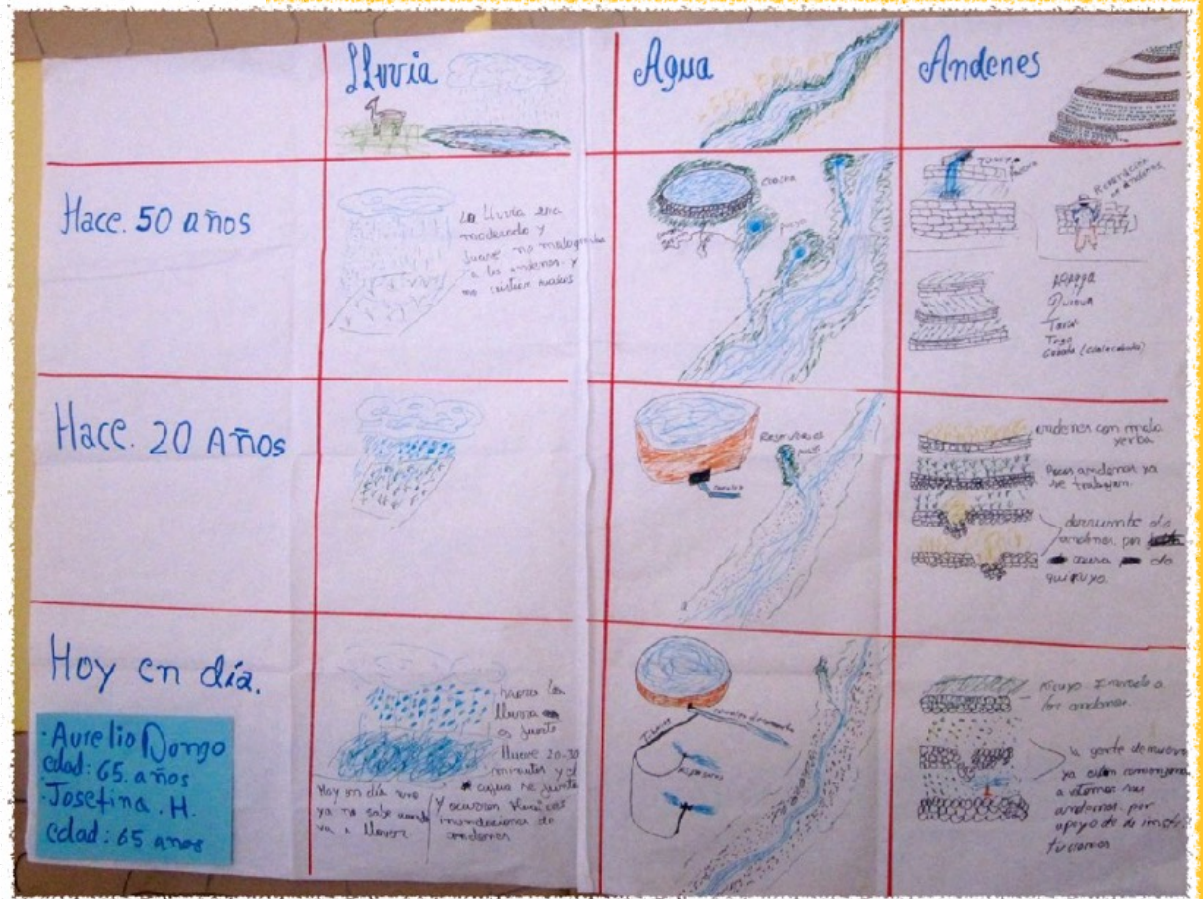# Threats to community knowledge

- **Imposing** development models

- **Transfer** of technology as a blueprint

- **Expropriation** of peoples' homes, livelihoods

- **Repression** of local knowledge

- **Instrumentalizing** local knowledge

- **Imposing** national languages

- **Science** disconnected from reality

- **Exploiting** local knowledge without sharing benefits

- **Displacing** communities from forests to lowlands

Strengthening local knowledge

- Recognize **local wisdom** and biocultural rights, build on local livelihoods and priorities

- Use Participatory Action Research tools to engage in **wisdom dialogues**

- Reorient professionals working with local communities through process of **'deskilling'**

- Focus on local needs and culture to **prioritize** community benefits

Cycle of PAR in the Field

Code of ethics

Free, prior and informed consent should be obtained to work with any community

Culture

Respect for local community and culture

Ownership

Respect local ownership of knowledge, wisdom, and data collected through research

Benefits

Projects and programming should directly benefit communities

Domains of Transformation

Access to natural ecosystems

Land, water, Seeds
Biodiversity provide
critical natural resources
for rural communities

Knowledge and culture

Transformative learning processes should incorporate the local knowledge and wisdom of elders, women
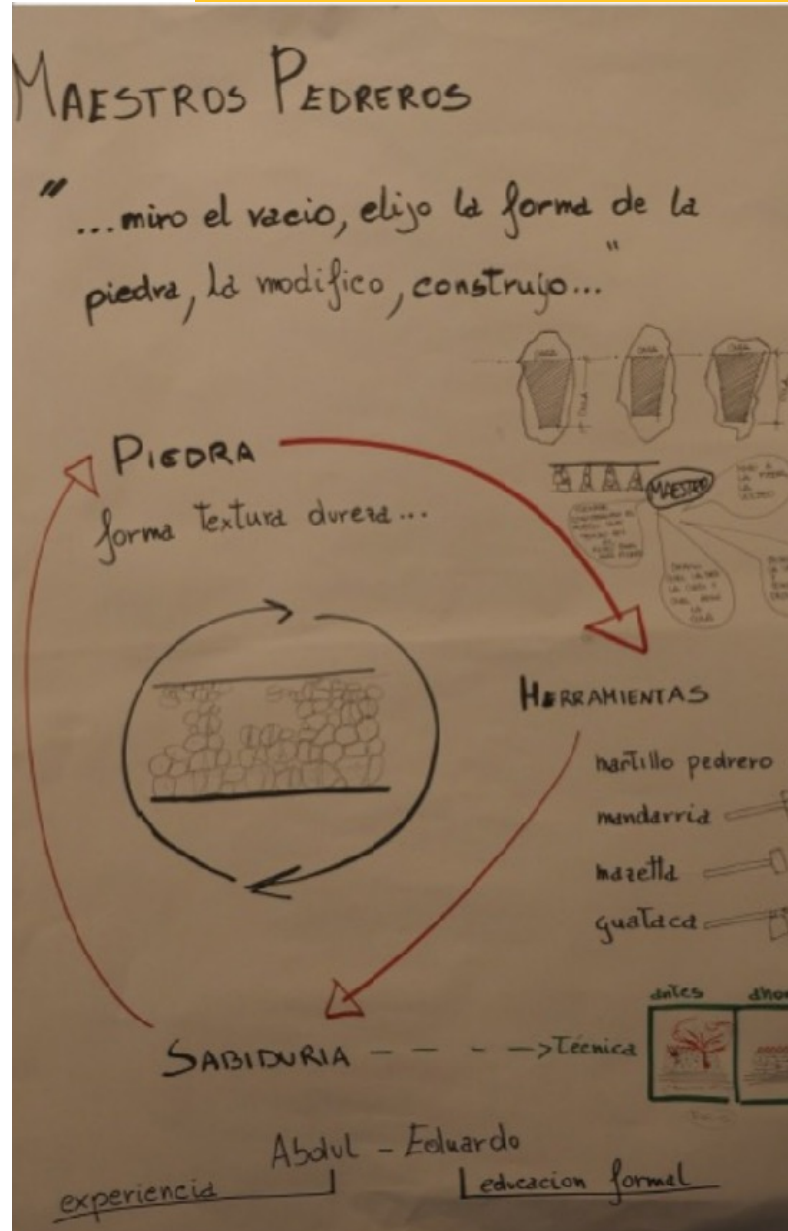
Banaue - Ifugao

Knowledge and culture

Moray

Inka Experimentation

Exchange systems

- Circular economy
- Informal markets
- Barter trade
- Gifts
- Self provision
- Alternative consumption

Networks

- Formal and informal

- Regional → global

- Decentralization

- Multi-levels of producers-consumers

- Diverse range of actors
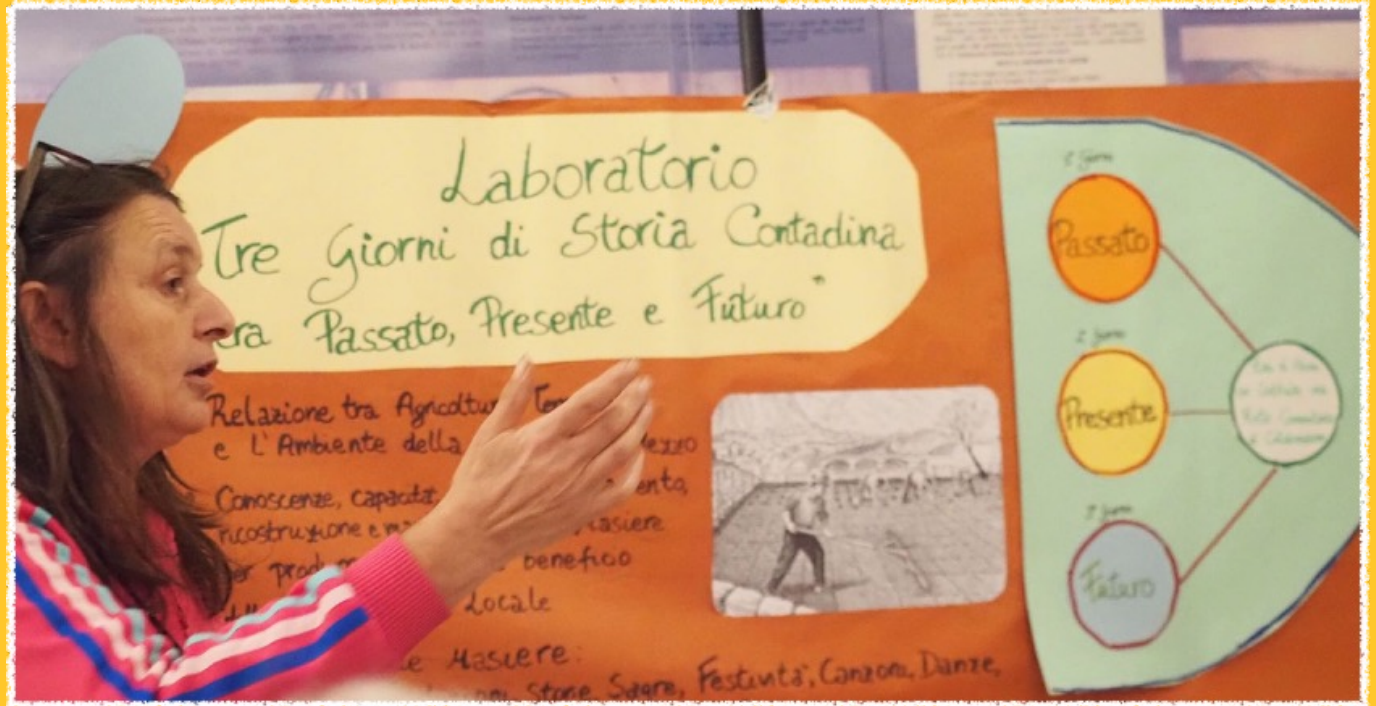
Equity & intersectionality

Intersecting dimensions of gender, age, class, caste, religion, race: addressing women's responsibilities

Discourse

Decolonizing concepts of development to recognize the value of local life plenitude, expressed in their own terms, like *Sumaq kawsay*

Support community planning in peasant laboratories dealing with past, present and future of their livelihoods towards liberating action

Part 3
Case Study: The Andean Initiative
connecting institutions with Indigenous strategies

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Presented by Dr. Stef de Haan

The End.