

PARTICIPATIVE INVESTIGATION

“(...) all participants shall be considered as a source of information and decision to analyze problems and contribute to solutions through joint actions” (Geilfus: 1997).

The investigation considered two integrated processes carried out by the Honduras Red Cross with support from SRC –the Ciudad España Plan (1999-2005)-, and the other one called Rapid inter-institutional Evaluation (2004-2005), carried out by SRC in coordination with the IFRC. It was based on the application of participative methodologies about social and institutional groups.

SURVEY STAGE

The problem identification was defined by the vision and speech of the benefited population participating on the projects, selecting a specific process, the Ciudad España one. In this process, the Honduras Red Cross and SRC participate since 1999 with a sustainability perspective linked to the execution of the integrated community program previously mentioned, the Ciudad España Plan.

1. The Ciudad España Plan process

The beneficiary population saw their original communities get destroyed in 1998 by hurricane Mitch and it stayed in a Humanitarian Aid context until it was relocated to a new area in 2002. This population has a series of problems which are general to the context of the whole country but aggravated by the fact they are being victims of a natural disaster. During their stay in temporary macro-shelters (1999 to 2002), some infrastructural projects were executed in the Valle de Amarateca (houses, community supplies, electrification and light, etc.), not forgetting the approach to the reality they were going through at that time from the psycho-affective attention point of view, as well as the community strengthening, economic development, community health and integral education, which led to the creation of community groups and committees, elaboration of regulations, etc.

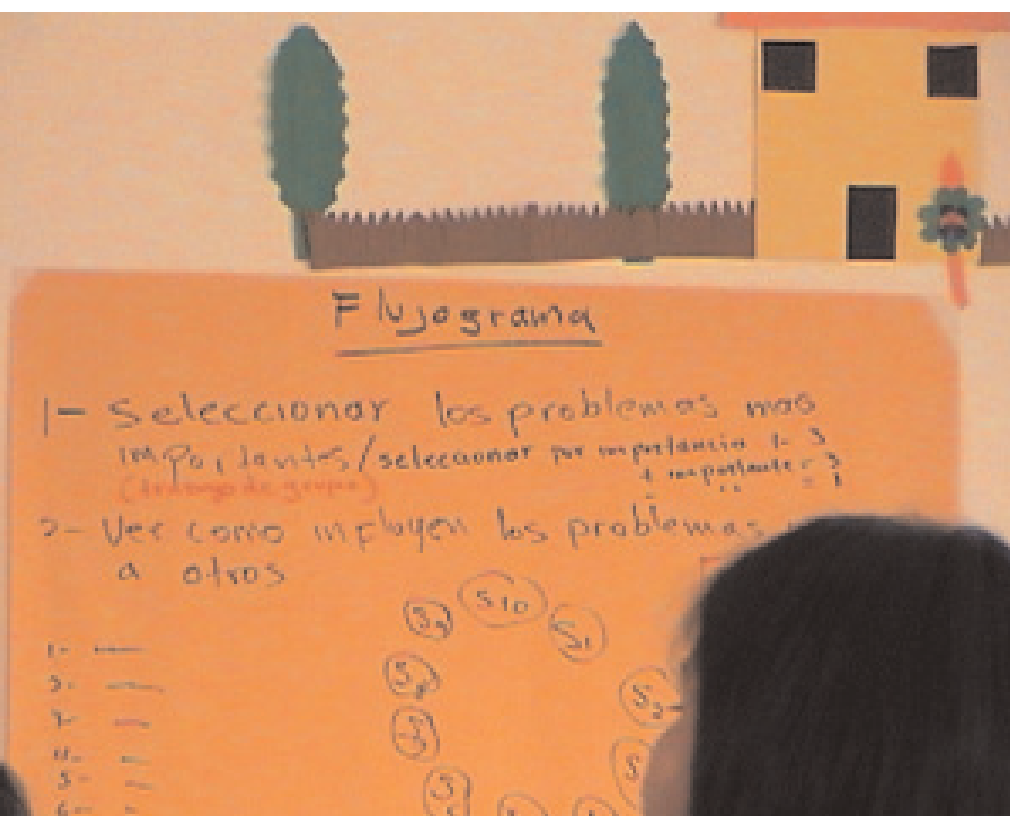
In 2004, the Honduras Red Cross and the Spanish Red Cross presented the Ciudad España Urban Director Plan, handing this urban zoning plan to the Central District municipality, for its approval.



A **needs and problems identification process** was implemented for this population, focusing on its new location, the living complex, in coordination with public institutions (such as the Education Secretariat, the Culture, Arts and Sports Secretariat, the Safety Secretariat or the Municipality), private and international (such as the Spanish International Cooperation Agency). This process, initially based on “participating observation”, which allows comparing the perception of the foreign researcher (etic) to the perception of the community (emic), partially finalized on July 2003. The last six weeks, based on a transversal age-gender and origin approach, three types of techniques oriented to “opening” the information qualitatively explaining group behaviors from a sociological sample we wanted to look at, were applied (structural techniques): brainstorming, mapping and sociodiagram (1). On the other hand, three types of techniques were applied oriented to the “closed” set-up of information, classifying quantitatively social behaviors (distributive techniques): problem tree, flow-chart and direct effect matrix.

Since 2004 a series of projects started as a conclusion of this identification trajectory, from five integrated approaches:

Both terms Emic and Etic are introduced in Social and Cultural Anthropology through theory tendencies which see culture as a sense giving system, of meaning. They come from Linguistics and specifically from the phonologic analysis, which makes a distinction between the phonemic level (sounds significant for a language's speakers) and the phonetic level (description made by the linguistic of the same sounds with valid categories for all languages).



a) From a **non-specific prevention perspective:**

- Local capacity strengthening, which promotes progressive training of a community agreement structure, capable of self-administering its future as a community, and the onset of group projects under a participative democracy model.
- Economic development, which pursues the improvement of socioeconomic conditions of the population, promoting employment, but above all supporting self-employment micro-business initiatives.
- Formal and non-formal education (in Elementary and High School ages), improving quality of the educative system, increase in school attendance and a better use of boys and girls spare time.

b) From a **specific prevention perspective:**

- **Youth and family social education**, strengthening family structures as a base to integral development of sons and daughters and promoting the increase in social opportunities and spare time of teenagers in risk (youth violence prevention pilot project).
- **Correspondence of opportunities between men and women**, trying to improve education and affective-sexual and reproductive culture of young and adults, and incorporate women to social and spare time structures (gender violence prevention pilot project).

2. Extending opportunities project process

The Honduras Red Cross implements, since 2002 (in parallel to the first process), and from a specific sector approach, a process related to the identification of the young violence problem, a phenomenon that in year 2002 was one of the main poverty and underdevelopment factors in the continental sub-region. Some steps are taken with the first intention of defining the role of the Red Cross regarding the problem based in the Principles and Values of the Movement (and on the National Society intervention approach), and in concordance with the dispositions to be established in Chile, in April 2003 on the **Plan of Action 2003-2007** of the XVII Inter-American Conference, after its presentation by its president, Mrs. Meneca de Mencía.

With the already mentioned support, this process is fostered with the celebration of research and inter-institutional consultation workshops, applying the IFRC methodology for PPP project planning: establishment of an inter-agency



After identifying up to twenty-eight related institutions; seven of them are incorporated to the work forum: YMCA, Save the Children UK, Casa Alianza, Alternativas y Oportunidades, Compartir Project, Horizontes Project and Honduras National Police Force.

forum, creation of a work commission, document analysis of secondary sources, identification of institutions and case studies, institutional SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats), problem/objective trees, strategies identification, identification of strategy prioritization criteria and considerations system, etc.

In early 2003, a consultancy is entrusted to the Jóvenes Hondureños Adelante-Juntos Avancemos organization (JHA-JA), directed by the expert Ernesto Bardales, in order to determine a pre-diagnosis on the situation of the gangs and youth violence in the Valle de Amaraté. This **pre-diagnosis** helps visualize Ciudad España as a community suitable for the implementation of a pilot project, once established that the Honduras Red Cross intervention approach would be violence prevention (and not gang member's rehabilitation). Soon after, an inter-institutional dialogue assembly is organized in La Ceiba about the problem of gang proliferation in the country, also with support from the SRC.

This process was partially finalized in August of the same year, with a definitive selection and under a pertinence criteria the two colonies to initiate the "pilot" intervention: San Francisco de Comayaguela, which is a colony where the Honduras Red Cross does not yet have an image of social transformation agent but is only perceived as a blood bank and relief agency which also works on some sewage and sanitation actions in the area, etc.; this community has a strong base organizational tradition and a consolidated identity and is one with



highest incidence of youth violence in the capital. This process, as already mentioned, is supported by the Dutch Red Cross and the Italian Red Cross. On the other hand we have **Ciudad España** which is the opportunity to have interventions within an integrated community program (see First Strategic Axis of the Plan of Action 2003-2007), on a well known and studied context where preventive action has been in place (nonspecifically) since 1999 and which represented a specific high degree of vulnerability regarding the young joining gangs because of the effects of the disaster caused by Mitch in their lives and due to the long period of time they lived in temporary shelters. The project falls in the so called “youth and family social education” approach.

In both colonies they are applied with the community and during the last four weeks different participative techniques which complement the previous, such as the Focus Group and the SWOT analysis. By the end of year 2003, Honduras Red Cross approves and begins the project Extending Opportunities for Adolescents with the objective of systematizing at the mid/long term the two “pilot” experiences, and in order to complete the final drafting of its National Violence Prevention Strategy.

In 2005, a Socio-economic study about Ciudad España Families is prepared (informatics database) with a sample of more than one thousand one hundred families, which thoroughly analyzes, and according to the population itself, the living and development conditions in the following areas:

- Socio-demographic and family composition
- Educational situation
- Health situation
- Productive area
- Reproductive area
- Social, city and community participation
- Equipment and infrastructure
- Coexistence and safety
- Intercultural activity and religion
- State of the house and environmental impact

3. Participative elaboration; the “Rapid Evaluation” model

In 2004, the SRC promoted a final complementary research process which, applying a Rapid Evaluation model, seeks to: 1. **extrapolate conclusions** from the two previous processes regarding “any type of violence, intolerance and social discrimination” (sector dimension) and from the Central American, Mexico and the Caribbean region (geographic dimension) and 2. finalize the establishment of such violence manifestations which will inductively define the “social violence” concept managed by the RSVP. For the first purpose, and in permanent contact with the SRC delegations in the region (Honduras, Nicaragua, Guatemala, El Salvador, Haiti and Dominican Republic), there is a gathering of all the violence or social discrimination prevention experiences taking place in the region and after which, there is the implementation—in close coordination with the IFRC Regional Delegation in Panama— **a consultation with all National Societies** of the region, oriented to the Diffusion and Youth delegates, other public and private actors of civil society in those countries (not part of the Movement), and to Red Cross project beneficiaries. For the second purpose, we follow the application of a series of techniques very specifically oriented to a group or to a specific topic to begin: round table about violence, semi-guided interview, human figure and family tests and questionnaire.



We also gather “lessons learned” and previous experiences in projects executed in Latin America and the Caribbean with SRC support in the last years and also the Spanish government through Youth Red Cross. We also take into consideration identification processes carried out by the Young Network on Student Violence in the metropolitan El Salvador area, carried out by the Ministry of Education of this country (together with UNICEF, Latin American Social Sciences Faculty

FLACSO-El Salvador Program and the German Society for Technical Cooperation GTZ), where the Salvadorian Red Cross participated through Youth Red Cross (FLACSO: 2004).



The process ends with consideration of conclusions produced in the last meetings of the XII Meeting of the Communicators and Diffusers Network REDICOM and the XVII Meeting of Presidents and Technical Seminars, with the presentation of corresponding advances of the RSVP document to all operating national societies and other agencies of the movement in the region, ratifying the interest in the topic and specifically on the initiative presented by the Spanish Red Cross.

ANALYSIS STAGE AND SYNTHESIS STAGE

The information produced by the three processes was analyzed, as well as all the experiences from projects and interventions. There is a thorough document analysis of related secondary sources: Central American Economic Integration Secretariat, IDB, different programs and agencies of the UN system such as UNICEF, UNESCO, PAHO, UNDP and ECLAC.

This was followed by the systematization and synthesis of information previously analyzed, processing conclusions in instruments designed for better reading and understanding: cause-effect logic, vertical components (trees) and horizontal (transversal axis).



REFLECTION STAGE

There was a first return of the result to a focus group, conformed by technical personnel of La Ceiba branch (Honduras) which had already worked in the identification phase, where it was reviewed and ratified at the technical level. Next, there was a second return of these results (already technically ratified) to the national societies of the region, so they could be reviewed, corrected and the text could be ratified from the institutional point of view.

Lastly, the final presentation of the document took place during a Regional Meeting celebrated in Tegucigalpa (Honduras) on September 31st and October 1st, 2005, with participation of representatives from Red Cross National Societies of Haiti, Dominican Republic, Honduras, Nicaragua, Guatemala, El Salvador, Costa Rica, Panama, Mexico and Cuba. During this meeting, where each national society was able to present their progress in the violence phenomenon identification process in their countries, many recommendations came up regarding the launching of the RSVP and specific projects, such as the need to have incidence on communication media as for responsible information management, involving them strategically in the joint effort for violence prevention in society. Likewise, deep institutional introspection was highlighted face to a social intervention in a sector such as violence, eradicating violence, discrimination or intolerance situations that may come up or are already being faced within the national society's themselves.

