

Almanac of the Future

A STORY OF SUCCESS

Motivational experience No. 7



The Way of Concertation

LIMA ESTE

THE WAY OF CONCERTATION



Lucy and Gloria tell their experiences

“The work we do is no longer for us; we motivate and accompany diverse initiatives for the development of our communities, neighborhoods, districts and city”.

Leading women, who have emerged from neighborhood social organizations in El Agustino and other districts in the eastern sector of Lima, share their experiences on the road to changing relations with authorities on the subject of local development. They put in the talk what they have achieved: the you to you with the municipality.

Our work is not limited to us alone

Lucy Mejía and Gloria Zevallos live with their families in El Agustino, a district in the east of Lima, founded 50 years ago, where 200,000 people live today. Together with other women from El Agustino, as well as the neighboring cities of Ate and Santa Anita, Lucy and Gloria have been trained in gender issues by SEA, a Jesuit NGO, supported by Misereor. In 2002, women from the surrounding districts were encouraged to participate in various education and motivation workshops. From this basic and organizational work, the organizational

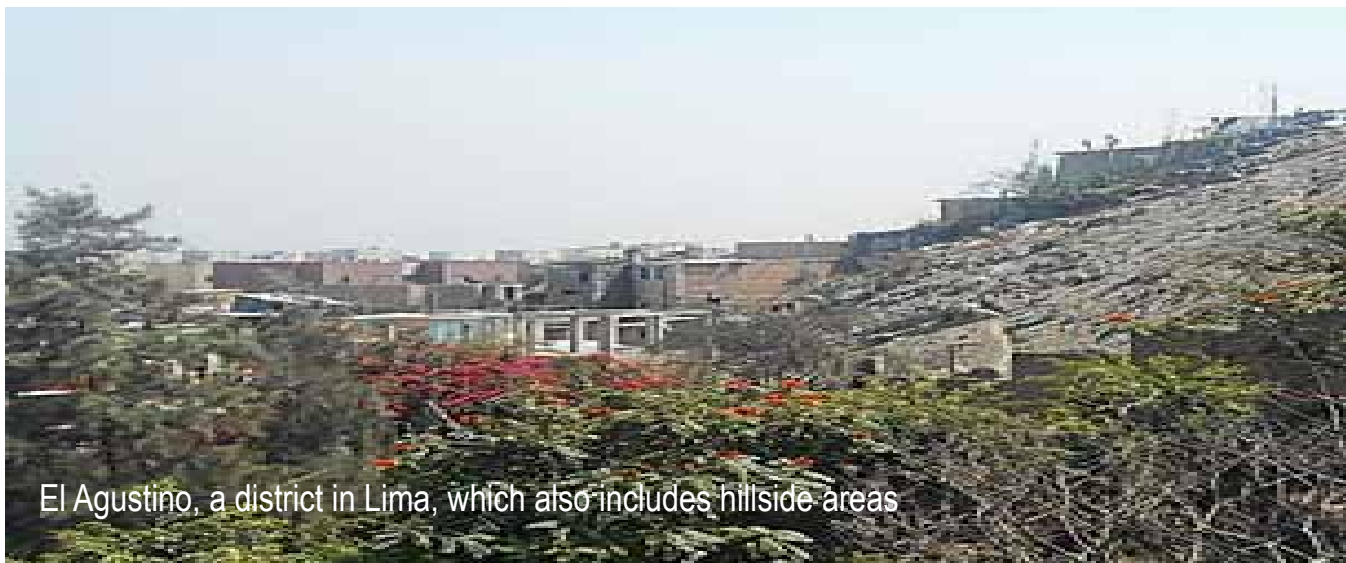
network of women emerged, in which many groups of women from the eastern part of the giant metropolis of Lima joined together. Gloria recalls: "The work we do is no longer for us; we motivate and accompany diverse initiatives for the development of our communities, neighborhoods, districts and city."

Starting the dialog

The local government at the district level is the municipality. Within the framework of its management, the legislation provides moments and spaces for concertation with the local civil society: participatory budgeting and thematic consultation groups. In El Agustino district, in addition to the participation of citizens in the definition of the public investment district budget, there is the multisectoral district coordination committee - COMUL.

Face of social change in el aguistino. Women "There are advances and setbacks in the processes," says Lupe Ramirez, president of the central communal banks; "with the change of authorities, mainly of mayor, we have to insist that there is no retreat in the opening by the authorities." For coordination between authorities, public entities (health, education, police etc.) and civil society, it is important that the municipality assumes the call for coordination and consultation meetings. The multi-sectoral committee in El Agustino is currently operating due to the permanent insistence of organizations and their leaders. "This was not always the case," Lupe recalls"

In the meantime, round tables on the topics of security and prevention of violence, health as well as drug problems are working. The dialogue with the public authorities has improved. "We managed to shorten the usual distance



El Agustino, a district in Lima, which also includes hillside areas

It is the women who have encouraged social change in El Agustino

between the citizens and the authorities," says Lucy. The times when one asked in vain for a conversation with an authority in El Agustino are happily overcome. The women's network does not give up quickly, as in the case of the former mayor of Santa Anita district, who refused in many ways to establish direct dialogue with the citizens, the network never missed the way of dialogue, sending letters of information to the authority, reporting the achievements in other districts, where concertation works. "Authoritarian decision-makers hurt themselves most by their non-participation style. When working with citizens, it is a win-win constellation, the inhabitants, the local development and the mandate carrier," explains Lucy. The mayor of El Agustino understood this and he was re-elected twice.

Not everything is a cup of tea

Mucho Ojo is the name of the newsletter of the school of leaders in eastern Lima. In its October 2014 edition, it reports that in municipal elections, governance pacts were achieved last year. The organized citizens invited to events in the different districts, summoning candida-



Gloria explains the function of the surveillance committee

tes for mayor with the purpose of publicly signing a governance pact for the period 2015-2018. Almost all the candidates, in addition to attending, signed the pact, committing themselves to an inclusive development agenda, previously elaborated by the social organization of each district. For El Agustino, the pact, promoted by the civic collective, includes goals for different dimensions of human development: social, economic, urban, environmental and institutional politics.

Gloria Zeballos is convinced that these agreements help, as long as organizations follow up on the fulfillment of goals and commitments. During the administration of the previous mayor of El Agustino, the monitoring committee, composed democratically by civil society has had to report irregularities in the management of the municipality. Similarly, the committee has called for the authority to hold its annual hearings to account for its management.

Every now and then, the surveillance committee is conducting surveys in the population through where the authorities are graded for their work. At a maximum score of 20, the former mayor came to 10 points. He did not like it at all. "Interpreting is important to civil society," says Gloria. Often, new authorities are distant and want to return to the politics of open doors. Sometimes it is also the employees of the local administration who have no desire to work with the citizens. If candidates have entered a "government pact" with the population, this is a good aid for cooperation and open doors. Lucy and Gloria agree that it is only a matter of time until the new mayor will seek the dialogue. "At least in his public speeches he speaks of it".

Acting in network

The network of women carries out diagnoses and mappings in the different areas of the districts. This has identified areas of risk or with little protection, mini-garbage dumps, invasion of public space by shops and commerce, among others. The results of participatory mapping, documented with photographs are publicly presented to the authorities, proposing and demanding solutions to the problems encountered. "People have the ability to propose changes," says Lucy. Thanks to these mappings and public agreements, it has managed to direct actions from the municipality: placement of public street lighting in risk areas turning them into boulevards with greater civic life, cleaning of public parks, notification of shops to avoid invasion of the sidewalk, placement of traffic lights for passers-by on the avenues and the closure of clandestine drug outlets.

Risk management and community resilience

A year ago, the network of women, together with the central of communal banks and the organization of popular kitchens formed the collective Groots in Peru; Groots is an international move-



The round table on health in El Agustino: coordinating public health facilities, district government and civil society organizations

ment that brings together women in action. As Groots Peru are participating in the "Step by step building community resilience" project, funded by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), taking charge of the community training component.

Leading women like Gloria and Lucy, in addition to their role as social actors in the district contexts, have taken on the role of facilitators since their volunteering. "In this project, we coordinate with local governments and relate first to the boards of the neighborhoods and communities, socializing with the community the idea of resilience and risk management," said the two leaders.

The geographic radius of the project is national, so Lucy and Gloria now travel to other regions and cities of Peru to work with women and men. Apart from the travel expenses no payment is provided. For Lucy and Gloria, that's okay. The recognition that the people with whom they are working is rewarding enough, explain both.

Phases of the project “Step by step towards the resilience of the municipalities” in the form of a seven workshop sequence:

- Introduction to the problem of climate change and the sensitization phase
- Review the history of the city district
- Theoretical community mapping
- Practical community mapping of the district: identification of risks and existing resilience
- Preparation of an action plan for identified risks and disasters
- Securing public resources to prevent crises
- Public presentation of the action plan



The people who live on slopes are particularly vulnerable to disasters.



Gloria and Lucy talking about new challenges: raising awareness about pollution, climate change and risk management.

Lucy, Gloria and Lupe like many other dedicated women have in common that they prefer public welfare processes than to stay at home.

Messages to the future

- Dialogue search and “dialogue with one another” can be the key to governance and development in the context of social inclusion.
- Community agendas oriented to the common good are felt in local development.
- Networking allows counterbalancing the power of public servants

The text, which is based on visits and discussions in situ, was created by Jorge Krekeler (advisor Misereor), but initially made consensual with the people visited. Special thanks to Lucy Mejía and Gloria Zevallos of the El Agustino Women’s Organization and Lupe Ramírez of the Central Communal Banks, as well as Carmen Robles and the team of Servicios Educativos El Agustino (SEA).

Almanac to the Future

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Original title “La vía de la concertación”

Experiencia Motivadora No.7 Almanaque del Futuro

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Edition: Januar 2016

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