¡Soy Capaz! Plus: Integrating Environmental Stewardship into Health Outreach in the Northeastern Peruvian Amazon

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Background Information
- Geographic focus area: Loreto, Peruvian Amazon
- Project sample: 6 ribeño communities (men n=11, women n=27, couples n=9)
- Subsistence farmers
- Staple crops: yuca, rice, beans, plantains
- Endemic malaria
- Lack of potable water
- No electricity
- High fertility rates
- Thatched homes
- Open defecation
- Seasonal flooding
- Geographically isolated
- Partner Organization: Amazon Promise
  - Quito, Loreto, Peru

Objectives
1. Identify the points of entry through which we may reach the community to begin addressing environmental concerns and developing in collaboration with the communities’ strategies of environmental stewardship.
2. Identify the most pressing points that the community cares about/worries about in terms of their health and explore linkages of these health concerns to environmental processes and degradation.
3. Identify leadership roles for different activities within the community.
4. Determine if there are existing groups or partnerships within the villages to collaborate with and how to do so, during the research/information gathering stage.
5. Integrate women’s empowerment and agency within the aforementioned objectives

Methods
- Semi-structure interviews (n=46)
  - 20 open ended questions incorporating strength, weakness, opportunity, threat analysis and visioning
  - Gender differentiated
  - Direct Participant Observation
  - 3-7 days spent in each community (n=6)
  - Focus Groups
  - Gender differentiated

Participants
- Project sample: n=11, women n=27, couples n=9

Overall Community Analysis
- Natural resources that have historically functioned as sources of livelihood are becoming more scarce.

Methods
- Military analysis and visioning

Results & Analysis

Gender Analysis
- Men are concerned with livelihoods and earning potential while women focus on immediate concerns such as nutrition and health.

Conclusions
- Existing and artisan groups viable entry points for outreach
- Community leadership and contacts interested in engaging with NGOs on environmental stewardship due to positive impacts of regional tourism and the potential for tourists if communities manage their natural areas effectively
- Use of medicinal plants prevalent (51%)
- Importance of health knowledge and identifying serious illnesses is reflected in the worries, needs and topics the community would like to learn about
- Universal desire for children to be educated and have a “better life” than their parents

Recommendations
- Increase the focus of Amazon Promise clinics on health outreach and removing barriers to positive behavior change
- Focus outreach and clinics on more isolated communities
- Link communities to other NGOs working on agriculture, climate resilience and potable water through a multi-stakeholder platform
- Train a Community Promoter of Health in each (or every other) community to promote local healthcare knowledge and truly sustainable health knowledge

Acknowledgments

Amazon Promise
- 3-7 days spent in each community (n=6)