



018530 - SWITCH



Sustainable Water Management in the City of the Future

Integrated Project
Global Change and Ecosystems

D6.3.3: Experiences and Learning

Organisation name of lead contractor for this deliverable: IRC International Water and Sanitation

Period covered: from M1 to M60
Start date of project: 1 February 2006
Project coordinator name:
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Date of preparation: January 2011
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Carol Howe
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Dissemination Level		
PU	Public	PU
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Deliverable 6.3.3

SWITCH Document
Audience The audience are both international stakeholders (the international training programme in Zaragoza and the article in the RUAF magazine) and SWITCH partners (presentations during scientific SWITCH conferences)
Purpose The purpose is to disseminate lessons learnt around Social Inclusion and to mainstream Social Inclusions within the SWITCH consortium.
Background Social inclusion is a complex topic as it departs from the more common view that poverty equals social exclusion. Within IUWM, social inclusion is a relative new subject. Secondly, there is a need to mainstream social inclusion within the SWITCH consortium as many research that was undertaken within the SWITCH consortium directly or indirectly touches upon issues related to social inclusion.
Potential Impact The potential impact is more attention to Social Inclusion related issues in IUWM research and planning.
Issues Mainstreaming Social Inclusion within IUWM needs to be supported by practitioners and researchers belonging to technical and non-technical disciplines. However, adequately addressing social inclusion issues requires specific skills and experience which often is not available in pre-dominantly technical projects such as SWITCH.
Recommendations Training as undertaken in collaboration with UN Water should be

Table of Contents

- "Sustainable Water Management in Cities: engaging stakeholders for effective change" is the key theme of an international conference which took place in Zaragoza, Spain – 13-17 December 2010.
- Dr K. Nyarko Experiences and learning are shared within and among stakeholder: Paper on water supply in Accra.
- Dr. K. Nyarko “Experiences and learning are shared – water supply in Ghana” Presentation during Second Scientific Conference 2007
- Martin, Verhagen, Luke Abatania 2008: “Urban Agriculture and Social Inclusion” RUAF Magazine August 2008
- Joep Verhagen. “Social Inclusion in Accra” PPT and presentation during the final SWITCH Scientific Conference in Lodz 2010.



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Social Inclusion

"Sustainable Water Management in Cities: engaging stakeholders for effective change" is the key theme of an international conference which took place in Zaragoza, Spain – 13-17 December 2010.

Start date of project: 1 February 2006

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IRC International Water and Sanitation Centre

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Session Nr.:	5	Day / Time:	Wednesday 15 December (15.00-17.00)	Duration :	2 hours
Topic / Title:	Pro-poor practices in urban water management				

<p>Rationale:</p>	<p>Urban water management policies, processes and practices are always likely to impact strongly on social issues. They deal with access to basic services – water and sanitation – that are fundamental rights and key to poverty and the standard of living. Where access to these services is not universal, usually it is the poor that receive the worst quality service or pay the most (and often both). Urban water management also involves major infrastructure developments and large-scale environmental engineering. Sewerage treatment plants, flood management works, and urban river restoration may displace communities – and frequently in the developing world the poorer communities live vulnerably near urban watercourses – and significantly change habitats for better or worse for local residents. Urban water management also creates employment opportunities, including potentially important opportunities for local communities and residents as well as professionals and experts. Whether urban water management actions contribute to social inclusion (of the poor, women, ethnic groups etc) or result in exclusion will depend on design and details of implementation. We should not assume that all actions will lead to social benefits. In fact, we should expect that where social issues are poorly understood or considered, and in contexts where governance is not strongly socially-inclusive, urban water management ‘improvements’ are likely to do social harm. Urban water management needs to be designed to be socially inclusive.</p> <p>Interesting quotes and facts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “We can no longer continue to do business as usual. In the past this has resulted in unacceptable levels of social exclusion and deprivation. Heart-rending testimonials of homelessness, of forced evictions, and of deprivation of the right to the city serve as a stark reminder of the human and social cost of disenfranchisement.” • “each year over the past decade, some 22 million people in developing countries have managed to leave slum conditions. While the target of the Millennium Development Goals on slums has been surpassed, the total number of people living in slums around the world has, however, increased from 776 million to 827 million over the past decade.” <p><i>UN-Habitat, 2010. The right to the city: bringing the urban divide. Report of the fifth session of the World Urban Forum Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 22–26 March, 2010</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • half the world’s population lives in urban areas and by the middle of this century all regions will be predominantly urban,virtually the whole of the world’s population growth over the next 30 years will be concentrated in urban areas. • By 2030 all developing regions, including Asia and Africa, will have more people living in urban than rural areas. • Cities can ... be places of inclusion and participation, but they can be also places of exclusion and marginalization. • Cities are, more often than not, divided by invisible borders.....the urban divide...[contrast with] Cities are,, vehicles for social change: places where new values, beliefs and ideas can forge a different growth paradigm that promotes rights and opportunities for all members of society. <p><i>UN-Habitat, 2008. State of the World’s Cities 2010/2011 Bridging The Urban Divide.</i></p> <p>Most WASH investment (which is from public finance and not users or donors) goes into capital investments in urban water and sanitation systems that predominantly serve the emerging middle-class with household connections.</p> <p>“In Africa, two thirds of the US\$ 45 billion a year being spent on infrastructure (for all sectors) is paid for by Africans, while in India more than 90% of the water and</p>
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	<p>sanitation plan for 2007-2012 is being financed by central and state and national financial institutions with only 8% coming from aid and only 1.5% from the private sector.”</p> <p>“In the last 20 years in developing countries, 1.2 billion people have been connected to household drinking water supplies, equivalent to the entire populations of North America and Europe and Japan and a bit more.”</p> <p>WASH development assistance aims to be pro-poor targeting the peri-urban and rural communities that have the greatest needs. Even more important is targeting the poorest countries that do not have the tax base to fund their own improvements through national public investment.</p> <p><i>IRC 2010 symposium Pumps, Pipes and Promises including keynote paper by David Hall, http://www.irc.nl/page/57894</i></p> <p>“Moving from analysis towards engaging disadvantaged groups and confronting prejudice and discriminatory beliefs is not a straightforward task. It requires resources, facilitation skills and commitment to tackle exclusion in an integrated and coordinated fashion. Piecemeal efforts are unlikely to be successful in securing the necessary social changes required.”</p> <p>“Sometimes, challenging vested interests and the status quo can lead to disputes and conflict. Efforts are required to try and foresee where these might occur (through skilled analysis of stakeholder positions and interests) and for support to be provided for mediation and negotiation as necessary, particularly for vulnerable groups. It is clear from gender mainstreaming efforts to date, that an integrated approach is required, but also an explicit recognition of the essentially political nature of social change in development processes – otherwise solutions will be superficial and bureaucratic, rather than transformational.” [makes a nice link to the political day]</p> <p>“Planning and policy-making processes do not represent level playing fields; some groups are more excluded than others. One of the key challenges at the heart of sustainable and equitable development is to find ways to level this playing field and help these groups to change their position in society – for the benefit of the whole society - by having greater voice and negotiating power in decision making.” [makes link to stakeholder engagement]</p> <p><i>Nelson et al, SWITCH briefing note (ref below)</i></p>
Objectives:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To introduce the main concepts of social inclusion • To share experiences on how development approaches (in urban water management) can be more inclusive, particularly in terms of the most marginalised groups in terms of poverty, ethnicity, race, gender and geographical location
Course of Session:	<p>Introduction of the session topic and format in plenary (10 minutes), John Butterworth, IRC International Water and Sanitation Centre</p>

	<p>Group discussions: sharing best practices (50 mins...including time to move rooms)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Based on our experiences, what are the best practices to promote social inclusion in urban water management? <p>In each group, one well prepared person will go first. They will be introduced and asked to share their case first (maximum 7 mins) responding to the question. Others will then be asked to share their experiences and examples. The starter cases will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Senyo Amengor, Ghana Water Company, Accra Evidalia Fernández, ACURTIR, Bogota To be completed (I would not add these names to the programme for now) <p>Panel discussion (60 mins) of experts/representatives of the groups – how can we improve social inclusion? (moderator, Bertha Darteh, SWITCH Accra)</p> <p>Each panellist will have participated in one of the groups and will be asked to share both their own practical examples of social inclusion and exclusion in urban water management, as well as other examples and issues that they have heard about during the group work (15 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alberto Tejada-Guibert, Director i.a. Division of Water Sciences, UNESCO – IHP (tbc) Mohan Peck, Senior Sustainable Development Officer, EIB, United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) Emmanuel Chinyamakobvu, UNCCD (tbc) Magda Vânia Corrêa Carmona, Municipality of Porto Alegre (tbc) Senyo Amengor, Ghana Water Company, Accra Evidalia Fernández, ACURTIR, Bogota <p>The overall focus will be the same question: Based on our experiences, what are the best practices to promote social inclusion in urban water management?</p> <p>Possible other questions (to be completed)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are the best practices (from your own experiences and the groupwork discussions) to promote social inclusion in urban water management? Is too much of the investment in WASH focused on centralised piped water and sewerage systems that serve the middle-class? Are water utilities a source of professionalism in the section that we need to reach peri-urban and rural area with sustainable services? What are the best models to promote this? Is social inclusion, and promoting pro-poor practices, fundamentally a political issue?
<p>Material / Aids Needed (flipchart, whiteboard, beamer, handouts, etc.):</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Video projector (in plenary) - Cards, flipcharts, pens etc in breakout rooms

<p>Responsibility (facilitator, speaker etc.):</p>	<p>Overall facilitation: John Butterworth Presentation: of key concepts, issues and discussion points (John Butterworth) Discussion starters: see above Panellists: see above Moderator of panel: Bertha Darteh, SWITCH Accra Contacts: Alberto Tejada-Guibert +33145684092</p>
<p>Background Reading / References:</p>	<p>SWITCH Briefing notes: An Introduction to Social Inclusion http://www.switchurbanwater.eu/la_guidance.php</p>



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D6.3.3: Experiences and learning are shared – water supply in Ghana

Due date of deliverable: Not dated
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Start date of project: 1 February 2006

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Organisation name of lead contractor for this deliverable DCE - KNUST

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Optimising social inclusion in urban water supply delivery in Ghana.

K. B. Nyarko, S. N. Odai & Bruce Fosuhene
*Civil Engineering Department,
KNUST, Ghana.*

January 9, 2007 Birmingham

Outline of presentation

- Introduction/Background
- Objectives
- Work done to date
 - Policy Framework
 - Survey of water to urban poor in Kumasi
- SWITCH proposed activities

Background I

- Only 60% of the urban population are adequately served by GWCL, formal utility provider
- The un-served and the under served include all categories of customers
 - rich and poor
 - Formal and informal settlements
- Within urban areas with piped system only 15% of the poor have access to piped water directly

Background II

- The worst affected by the poor water supply in urban areas is the urban poor.
 - Majority of the poor are not served by the formal utility, with benefits of scale and cross subsidies
 - Water services from alternate service providers are characterised by
 - High tariffs, 3 – 15 times GWCL price
 - Poor water quality
- SWITCH Work Package 6.3 seeks to optimise Social Inclusion in Urban Water Supply delivery

Objectives

- Review of policy framework to identify opportunities to promote pro-poor orientation in water supply delivery
- Assess existing situation of water service to the urban poor
- Identify mechanisms to optimise social inclusion in urban water service delivery

Urban Water Supply in Ghana

- Formal Urban Water service provider is GWCL
- Other Service Providers:
 - GWCL dependent: Secondary and tertiary providers relying on GWCL source
 - Independent providers not relying on GWCL
- Other Service providers:
 - Tanker operators
 - Vendors
- PURC definition of the urban poor:
 - Without access to regulated piped supply
 - depend on secondary and tertiary providers
 - Buy by a bucket

Sodom & Gomorrah



GWCL hydrants for the tanker Operators



Situation of urban poor - Perspective of the Utility

- Unplanned nature makes extension difficult physically
- Utilities are not authorized to connect residents in unplanned areas
- some of the informal areas are “difficult areas” where actions to recover bills could be a problem. E.g. where the areas harbor criminals
- Areas have low ability to pay for connection and water charges

Policy and legal Framework

- Act 310 – GWCL should supply all inhabitants in its service area
- The Constitution of Ghana,
 - Article 35 (3) enjoins the state to promote just and reasonable access by all citizens to public facilities and services, which naturally include water supply services.
 - Article 17, also Allows for “different provision for different communities having regard to their special circumstances”. This provision allows for the service providers to have appropriate mechanism to optimise social inclusion.

Drinking Water Policy

- Two strategies are mentioned in the policy.
 - Using a tariff rate structure that provides an optimal benefit to consumers including low-income consumers.
 - Encourage cooperation between GWCL and small-scale independent providers, rather than grant exclusivity to either party, to facilitate adequate and affordable provision of safe drinking water to un-served and underserved areas.

Regulation of water supply

- Act 538 -PURC functions include:
 - Protect interest of the consumers and providers of utility services
 - Promote fair competition among public utilities
- PURC has come up with its Social Policy
 - Require that utilities include pro-poor criteria when undertaking investments.

PURC Social Policy

- PURC will lead the formation of a working group of stakeholders to address provision of service to the urban poor. The group's tasks will include the targeting of any social funding or other relief schemes for the poor.
- PURC will undertake pilot studies to test interventions in delivering water to low-income communities to provide lessons that will inform its regulatory policies, the supply and payment options available to the utility and the criteria for determining investments targeted to the urban poor.

PURC Social Policy -Proposed interventions

- bring tanker filling points closer to areas of need (recognising technical limitations) through collaboration with Ghana Water Company Limited;
- require GWCL to allocate a percentage of their production to secondary providers;
- promote co-operation between the utility and secondary providers in safeguarding the quality of service given to consumers

Interaction with the urban poor in Kumasi

- Source of water
 - 91 % from neighbours and standpipe
 - 7 % house connections,
- Time spent a day in fetching water
 - 78 % between 2 –6 hrs.
 - 14 % between 1 - 2 hrs
- Water Consumption
 - 79% use less than 36 litres/cap/day
 - 21 % use 45 litres/cap/day
- Expenditure on Water
 - 15 % of household income is spent on water.

SWITCH ACTIVITIES

- WP 6.3 Task 1-3, methodology, baseline, best practices
- Monitor the strategies in the PURC social policy
- Monitor Pilot project proposed by PURC/GWCL/Wateraid
- Through the learning alliance
 - Involve stakeholders in the research
 - Sharing research outcome
 - Encourage research uptake.

THANK YOU



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Deliverable 6.3.3 – Experiences and learning are shared within and among stakeholder: Paper on water supply in Accra

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Optimising social inclusion in urban water supply in Ghana

K. B. Nyarko*, S. N. Odai and K. B. Fosuhene
Civil Engineering Department
KNUST, Kumasi, Ghana

Abstract

The study was aimed at improving urban water supply to the urban poor. This was based on the review of policies, legal and regulatory framework for water supply and empirical evidence of the nature of water supply to the urban poor. The paper discusses the framework for identifying opportunities for optimizing social inclusion.

Keywords: Social Inclusion, Pro-poor, Urban Poor, Water supply

1 Introduction

By 2025, urbanisation in Africa will have progressed from about 32 to 50 % with the urban population increasing from about 300 million to 700 million (WUP, 2003). If current trends prevail, the large majority of urban dwellers will be living in poverty in unplanned or informal settlements without access basic services such as water and sanitation affecting public health adversely. In Ghana, the poor (defined by Living Standards Measurement criteria) make up 47% of the total population in urban piped system areas (PURC, 2005). Within urban piped system areas only 15% of the poor have access to piped water either directly or via yard taps (PURC, 2005). Improving water supply services to the urban poor is justified on the grounds that basic quantity of water for basic needs may be considered as a merit good with significant public health benefits. In spite of acknowledging the social objectives of water supply, the worst affected by the poor water supply situation in sub Saharan Africa is the urban poor (WUP, 2003). Some of the barriers for rapidly extending services to the urban poor are the inadequate policy, legal and regulatory framework for pro-poor water services delivery and lack of understanding of specific requirements of low-income households (WUP, 2003)

The Public Utilities Regulatory Commission (PURC) of Ghana, which has responsibility for economic regulation of urban water supply, has indicated that it has a primary concern to address the interests of the poor. This has led to the adoption by PURC of a working definition of the urban poor as those (i) without direct access to regulated piped supplies, (ii) who depend on secondary and tertiary suppliers and (iii) who buy by the bucket.

* Corresponding Author: nyark10@yahoo.com

The purpose of this study is to improve water supply by incorporating pro-poor orientation and optimising social inclusion in Urban Water Supply delivery. This paper begins with a review of the policy, legal and regulatory framework for pro-poor water supply in Ghana. A case study on water supply in two low-income communities in Kumasi, the second largest city in Ghana is presented to provide empirical data on the nature of water services to the urban poor. The opportunities for optimising social inclusion in Ghana's urban water supply delivery are then discussed.

2 Review of Ghana's Pro-poor water Supply Framework

2.1 The Pro-poor water supply framework

The review was conducted based on desk study of relevant documents and interviews with key informants in the water supply related institutions. The key documents reviewed were the National constitution, the drinking water policy and the Acts establishing the urban water utility and the economic regulation body, which are described.

2.1.1 National constitution

GWCL is required to supply water to all inhabitants in the supply area (GOG, 1965). The Constitution of Ghana, Article 35 (3) enjoins the state to promote just and reasonable access by all citizens to public facilities and services, which naturally include water supply services (GOG, 1992). In Article 17 of the same constitution, Parliament is permitted to make "different provision for different communities having regard to their special circumstances". This provision allows for the service providers to have appropriate mechanism to optimise social inclusion.

2.1.2 Ghana Water Company Limited Act

The Ghana Water Company Limited (GWCL), successor of the Ghana Water and Sewerage Corporation (GWSC) is the lead organisation responsible for urban water supply delivery. GWCL is a statutory corporation created by parliament under the Ghana Water and Sewerage Corporation Act, 1965 (Act 310). GWCL is required to supply water to all the inhabitants in its supply areas. However, GWCL is only able to serve on 60 % of its potential customers. The Act also states that, taking one year with another the cost of water supply should be recovered.

2.1.3 Drinking water policy

One of the objectives of the drinking water policy is to ensure accessibility to safe drinking water by low-income and peri-urban consumers. Two strategies are mentioned in the policy. One strategy is to adopt a tariff rate structure that provides an optimal benefit to consumers including low-income consumers. Another strategy is to encourage cooperation between GWCL and small-scale independent providers, rather than grant exclusivity to either party, to facilitate adequate and affordable provision of safe drinking water to un-served and underserved areas.

2.1.4 PURC Act

PURC was established by the PURC Act, 1997, Act 538 to regulate the water and electricity services in Ghana (GOG, 1997). For water supply the mandate covers only urban water supply. PURC's key tasks include the following:

- Provide guidelines for setting rates for the provision of utility services
- Protect the interest of consumers and utility services providers
- Monitor and enforce standards of performance for provision of utility services
- Promote fair competition among public utilities
- Initiate and conduct investigation into standards of quality of service given to consumers

The Act also gives PURC the power to make regulations that are necessary for the implementation of its mandates. The commission has issued two regulations: the Public Utilities (Termination of Service) Regulations 1999. LI 1651 and Public Utilities (Complaints procedure) Regulations 1999. LI 1665. The commission has released two new publication namely the "Social policy and strategy for water regulation, 2005" and "Urban tariff policy, 2005".

2.1.5 PURC Social Policy

The PURC social policy and regulatory strategy sets out the objectives of PURC in fulfilling its duty to protect water consumers, which includes both the served and un-served (PURC, 2005). This is in fulfillment of PURC's commitment to address social fairness, in view of market imperfections, and ensure that the poor and vulnerable are protected by adequate mechanisms that provide them with their basic needs for water. The key points of PURC Social Policy are:

- PURC will take the lead role in the resolution of pro-poor issues in the urban water sector in line with its regulatory mandate to protect the interest of consumers, as well as Government poverty reduction objectives.
- PURC will support any interventions, which result in improved and more reliable access to water, with the ultimate goal of direct connections.
- PURC will instruct urban water utilities to include pro-poor criteria when undertaking investments in water supply projects.
- PURC will lead the formation of a working group of stakeholders to address provision of service to the urban poor. The group's tasks will include the targeting of any social funding or other relief schemes for the poor. PURC will undertake pilot studies to test interventions in delivering water to low-income communities to provide lessons that will inform its regulatory policies, the supply and payment options available to the utility and the criteria for determining investments targeted to the urban poor.
- Secondary and tertiary suppliers – tankers, cart operators and domestic vendors – form an important aspect of the water distribution chain. PURC acknowledges that the best approach to water delivery is to provide direct supply through the utility's mains. However the Commission recognizes that this will be hard to achieve in the short to medium term, and secondary providers will continue to play an important role in the supply chain. PURC has therefore resolved to adopt innovative approaches to reaching the urban poor in the short term through some of the following interventions to enhance the capacity of secondary suppliers to deliver acceptable service at an affordable price:
 - bring tanker filling points closer to areas of need (recognising technical limitations) through collaboration with Ghana Water Company Limited;
 - require GWCL to allocate a percentage of their production to secondary providers; promote co-operation between the utility and secondary providers in safeguarding the quality of service given to consumers

2.2 Strategy for pro-poor water supply

According to the social policy, PURC will insist that public utilities include pro-poor criteria when undertaken water supply projects and promote cooperation between utility and secondary providers in safeguarding the quality of service. This is however yet to be implemented. Another strategy that has been discussed is a social connection fund to subsidise or provide free connections for the poor and vulnerable groups; and to enable them have a direct connection to the water system. However, the social connection fund is not supported because of the lack of network mains (PURC, 2005).

According to the GWCL and PURC, the concerns of the low-income groups are partially addressed through the tariff structure and the provision of public standpipes for informal areas and urban poor neighbourhoods where house connection is not feasible. GWCL uses a uniform tariff structure throughout the country for domestic customers irrespective of the income level or type of neighbourhood. It is an increasing block tariff with lifeline for the first block of 20m³ (it used to be 10m³). A study on domestic water pricing for households with direct connection to the piped network in Kumasi revealed that the low income households in multi occupancy houses with single meter “compound houses” were paying 20 % more per unit volume than the high income users in single family houses (Nyarko et al, 2004). The same study also revealed that the low-income households were using 56 l/c/d whilst the high-income households were using 120 l/c/d.

For the poor and the vulnerable dwellers in the informal settlements, the supply options are GWCL standpipes, private standpipes, neighbours and tanker operators. The benefits of the lifeline tariff is only enjoyed by the users of the GWCL standpipes, but the number of GWCL standpipes is woefully inadequate making the other expensive sources the available option for the poor and vulnerable. The prices of water from the tankers operators to the end users are very expensive because of the transport cost amounting to about 75 % of the cost (WUP, 2003). There are also no clear mechanisms or strategies in place to ensure that the costs of their operations are reduced for the benefit of the customers.

The PURC, in collaboration with Ghana Water Company Limited (GWCL) and WaterAid, has plans to undertake pilot projects to obtain lessons in the provision of water supply to poor and low-income households. These lessons will inform PURC’s social policy, offer GWCL options for supply of water to poor communities. These interventions will test community-management of bulk water supply, supply through standpipes and involvement of women in water delivery to deprived households. Other objectives include improved water quality of water delivered through secondary suppliers and the elimination of illegal connections. The pilot projects are planned for:

- i) South Teshie (Nshorna) in the Accra East Region (ATMA) where improved bulk storage arrangements will be put in place,
- ii) Glefe-Age in the Accra West Region (ATMA), where public standpipes will be provided

3 Water services to the urban poor: Case of Kumasi

Questionnaires were administered to 210 households in the two communities for information on the socio-economic conditions and nature of water services. In addition, focus group interviews and direct interviews were conducted with identifiable groups and key informants for more insight on the nature of water services to the low income communities.

3.1 Description of the Communities

The two low income communities used for the study are Ayigya and Anloga. Ayigya community lies opposite KNUST along the main Accra-Kumasi Road and bounded on the south by Kentenkorono and on the north by the Sisa stream. Ayigya has a population of 30,000, land area of 50 ha, 5,966 households and 1181 houses. The Anloga community is on the southern part of 24th February Road between Aboabo River and Sisa Stream. Anloga has a population of 38,000, land area of 70 ha, 7,694 households and 1057 houses. The socio-economic profiles of the communities are shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Socio-economic profile for the study areas

Socio-economic Parameters		Anloga	Ayigya
Sex	Male	21.6%	17.6%
	Female	78.4%	82.4%
Age	No Response		0.9%
	Less 24 years	3.9%	12.0%
	25-29 years	13.7%	20.4%
	30-40 years	58.8%	36.1%
	41-50 years	13.7%	17.6%
	Above 51 years	9.8%	13.0%
Marital status	Single	17.6%	10.2%
	Married	70.6%	79.6%
	Divorce	11.8%	10.2%
Education	Illiterate	42.2%	30.6%
	Primary	11.8%	13.9%
	MSLC/JSS	39.2%	44.4%
	Secondary	5.9%	8.3%
	Tertiary	1.0%	2.8%
Occupation	Petty Trading	78.4%	64.8%
	Artisan	11.8%	16.7%
	Public/Civil Service	2.0%	3.7%
	Others	7.8%	12.0%
	Unemployed		2.8%
Income per day	No response	8.8%	5.6%
	Less than ₵10,000	9.8%	8.3%
	₵10,000- ₵20,000	48.0%	57.4%
	₵20,000- ₵40,000	29.4%	23.1%
	₵40,000- ₵60,000	3.9%	2.8%
	N/A		2.8%
Expenditure per day by Household (HH)	N/R	7.8%	15.7%
	Less than ₵20,000	6.9%	1.9%
	₵20,000- ₵40,000	69.6%	68.5%
	₵40,000- ₵60,000	15.7%	13.9%
Residential Status	Tenant	86.3%	66.7%
	Family Member	9.8%	28.7%
	Landlord	3.9%	4.6%
Family Size	1-3 members	17.6%	15.7%
	4-6 members	60.8%	53.7%
	7-9members	13.7%	25.0%
	10-12members	7.8%	5.6%

3.2 Access to water and Time spent in accessing water

91 % of households have access to water by means of purchasing from a neighbour. 7% own a pipe connection whilst 2% use a public standpipe. 78% of the households spend between 2 to 6 hours a day fetching water and 14% spend between 1 to 2 hours shown in figure 1. This is mostly done by women and children and affects attendance and punctuality at school.

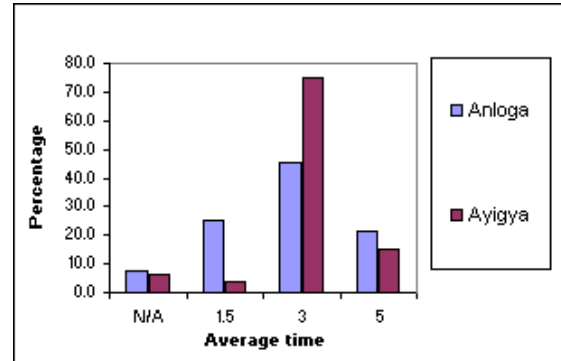


Figure 1: Time spent accessing water

3.3 Distance to water source

Figure 2, shows the distance to the water source. About 70% of respondents walk more than 700 metres to fetch water.

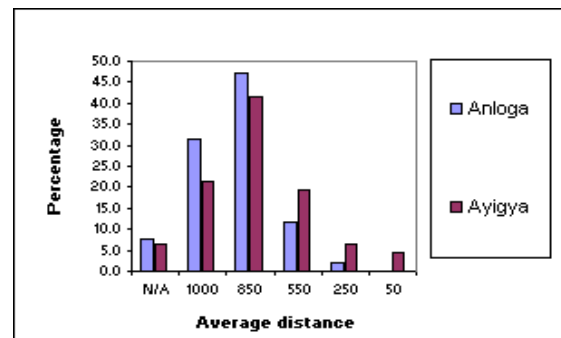


Figure 2: Distance to Water Source

3.4 Expenditure on water

53% of households spend between 2,000 and 4,000 cedis (US\$0.22 and US\$0.44) daily on water. The average income is 20,000 cedis (US\$ 2.22) and the average household spends 3,000 cedis (US\$0.33) on water. This gives the percentage of income spent on water as 15%.

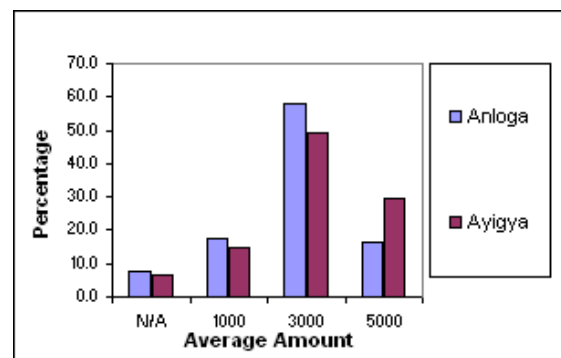


Figure 3: Expenditure on Water

3.5 Water Consumption per person/day

79% of respondents use less than 36 litres (2 buckets¹) a day. This amount is less than the 50 litres of water recommended as essential for basic needs. Some respondents were using on average 9 litres of water a day.

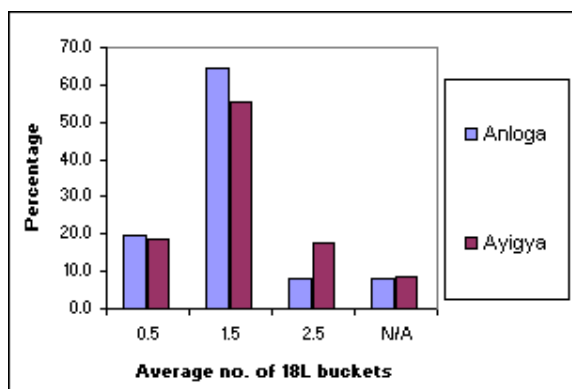


Figure 4: Water Consumption /person/day

4 Framework for identifying opportunities for maximising social inclusion

The policy framework for pro-poor water supply and the empirical evidence from the two low-income communities in Kumasi suggests that there is scope for improving water supply services to the urban poor and low income communities. The social policy for urban water supply by PURC is the first attempt with promising ideas and strategies to enhance pro-poor orientation in the water service delivery but not yet implemented. For instance, the plan to pilot pro-poor interventions by PURC, WATERAID and GWCL is not in place and expected to be in place by 2007. Also, the idea of establishing clear relationships between formal and informal service providers to enhance services has not been implemented. Specific activities as part of the collaboration may include the following:

- Memorandum of understanding between formal service providers and informal service providers
- Licensing of alternative service providers to offer them recognition and also regulate their activities
- Provide more filling point for tanker operators near the urban poor communities

The PURC indicated that targeted subsidy for the poor and vulnerable using Social Connection Funds to enable easy access to the network would not be supported because of the lack of distribution pipes in the low income areas. Given that connection cost for accessing piped water supply could be a barrier (WUP, 2003) the social connection fund should be re-investigated especially when distribution lines are provided in the low income areas.

From the survey, the low income residents relying on informal service providers pay relatively high tariffs for water. Therefore, appropriate tariffs that recognise the needs of the urban poor and provide optimal benefit to customers are essential. The level of customer involvement in urban water supply delivery is low suggesting that mechanisms that give customers a voice and involve them in decision-making could improve services to the urban poor through increased transparency and accountability.

¹ 1 bucket of water has a capacity of 18 litres.

The SWITCH research and demonstration activities provides a framework for optimising social inclusion for water delivery to the urban poor through the learning Alliance Framework by building on existing strategies. The SWITCH activities envisaged are:

- Further review the pro-poor water policy framework by incorporating output of interviews with key informants and review of pro-poor orientation in other sectors such as health.
- Rapid survey of the nature of water supply to urban poor in Accra
- Monitor the strategies in the PURC social policy and pilot project by PURC/WATERIAD/GWCL
- Stakeholder involvement in the research through the learning alliance
- Sharing research outcome through learning alliance for input and ownership and research uptake.

5 Conclusion

The existing policy, legal and regulatory framework could be more enabling to enhance water supply to the urban poor. There are not sufficient incentives for the formal utilities to serve the urban poor. There is also the need to give the customers more voice to strengthen the accountability mechanism for the service providers to deliver improved services to the urban poor. Given that the majority of the low income and urban poor pay high tariffs compared to those getting water from the piped network it is important to design an appropriate tariff regime that addresses the needs of the urban poor. The SWITCH research will provide the framework to understand and optimize social inclusion for urban water delivery.

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Urban Agriculture and Social Inclusion



Adrienne Martin
Joep Verhagen (Corresponding Author)
Luke Abatania

Understanding social exclusion requires an in-depth investigation
Photo: IWMI Ghana

The SWITCH programme promotes a participatory, multi-stakeholder approach via its city learning alliances. As these stakeholder participation processes do not necessarily give a voice to socially excluded groups, SWITCH is initiating specific activities to address issues around social inclusion¹. The ultimate objective of these activities is to ensure more equal and sustainable management of, use of, and access to urban water.

Social inclusion describes the state of being included in a community and society as a whole; a condition in which individuals and groups can access the range of available opportunities, services and resources and contribute to planning and decision making. This notion of social inclusion has come to the fore because of the growing recognition that well-being involves more than reasonable income levels and access to material goods. Its converse is social exclusion, which refers to a “process by which certain groups are systematically disadvantaged because they are discriminated against on the basis of their ethnicity, race, religion, sexual orientation, caste, descent, gender, age, disability, HIV status, migrant status or where they live. (DFID, 2005). Hence, social exclusion and poverty are not necessarily the same, but poverty is often an important contributing factor to social marginalisation. Social inclusion also refers to the policies and actions intended to influence institutions and change the perceptions that create and sustain exclusion (Beall, 2002). To identify such actions, it is necessary to understand the existing context and processes of social exclusion.

Dimensions of social exclusion

Understanding social exclusion and identifying the types of actions needed to promote social inclusion, requires an in-depth investigation of the following three dimensions of social exclusion:

- what people have or do not have, in terms of access to natural, monetary, and other resources;
- where they live; spatial deprivation occurs when stigma or the bad reputation of a specific neighbourhood acts as a barrier to creating social contacts or accessing markets;
- who they are; discrimination flowing from specific group identities as perceived by others; for instance, discrimination based on gender, ethnicity or occupation.

These different dimensions of social exclusion may overlap, simultaneously excluding people from employment, livelihood opportunities, property, housing, education, citizenship, personal contacts and respect (Silver, 1994). For example, poorer urban areas inhabited by excluded social groups tend to have limited access to water and sanitation.

Social exclusion and urban agriculture

This article presents lessons learned related to social inclusion in the work of the SWITCH working group on urban agriculture in Accra. Action research, with urban agricultural producer groups as described in the previous article, pays close attention to the dimensions of inclusion and access. A baseline study was undertaken at the Dzorwulu-Roman Ridge site, one of the largest sites in Accra. The social component included discussion at the level of the producer association, farmers’ group and individual producers and market traders. It explored the diversity of households

involved in urban agriculture (gender, age and ethnicity) and its contribution to livelihoods. It looked at the inclusiveness of producer organisations and the capacity of urban producers to have a voice in city planning and other relevant platforms.

Identity and social exclusion

There is a vegetable producers' association at the site, as well as an informal group. Many of the association members were originally migrants from Northern Ghana and Burkina Faso and members of northern origin remain the majority. The association has twenty-six members, three of whom are women. There are no written membership criteria for membership of the group. In general any person farming at the site qualifies to join the group. There was no indication of exclusion or discrimination either within or from outside the group on the basis of ethnic origin or religion. Vegetable production at the site is a male-dominated venture. The women generally have smaller plots than their male counterparts, which the women said reflects their limited capacity to manage a larger area. Female household members are not involved in vegetable production, but harvesting the crops is mainly done by women market traders.

The land is fully occupied so there is limited potential to expand farming at this location. Following the acquisition of plots by the original occupants, subsequent transmission of plots has been through inheritance or allocation from relatives, friends or employers. Existing farmers or new entrants can only obtain additional or new plots through fragmentation of existing plots or when an occupant leaves his/her plot for good. Allocation thus depends on social relationships, although once the plot is allocated, it is a permanent arrangement. The group has investigated the possibility of acquiring additional farm land at another site, but so far without success. The main form of social-exclusionary attitudes relates to the negative public image of urban agriculture (exclusion based on occupation and location) and the group's associated low social status.

Economic basis of social exclusion

The baseline study indicated that urban agriculture is an occupation that has provided sustainable livelihoods for farmers and their families, in some cases, for decades. Vegetable farming is the most important economic activity among the survey households – for six households out of twenty-five interviewed, it was their sole source of income. For the others, vegetable farming was the first among the three most important economic activities of the household, providing up to 82 percent of household income. While the producers are not well off, vegetable production

provides a reasonable living in comparison to occupations of people with similar levels of education. Seven of the twenty-five farmers interviewed were illiterate, nine had Koran or primary schooling, eight had junior secondary or middle schooling and one had secondary schooling. Farmers report profits in the range of US\$ 600–1,500 per farmer per year with a mean profit of about US\$ 1,000 per farmer per year. Apart from cash benefits, the group mentioned urban agriculture as a source of employment and better nutrition. An estimated 95 percent of vegetables consumed by the households is grown on their own plots. Thirteen households reported that they have savings and no debts while a further five indicated they have both savings and debts.

The farmers commented that urban agriculture “is a source of employment and more remunerative than any other job they could get given their backgrounds”. They said that others may be financially better off, but they are healthier because of better nutrition from the consumption of vegetables. The group was convinced that urban agriculture can be a pathway out of poverty, but added that larger areas of land would be required. Land is a limiting factor for poverty reduction through urban agriculture.

Group organisation and empowerment

The perception of urban agriculture and the impression of poverty associated with it contributes to the lack of ‘voice’ experienced by the farmers. Strengthening their organisation is one strategy to build internal cohesion and support and a structure through which their needs can be articulated.

Social relationships among the farmers were generally described as cordial or good and most thought there was trust and willingness to share information. There are shared arrangements for using piped water for irrigation. The vegetable growers' association (founded in 2001) was initially motivated by the need for social as well as financial mutual support. Membership is voluntary, but applicants are expected to pay a registration fee (about \$2) as well as monthly subscriptions (\$1). Levels of mutual social support are good, but payment of subscriptions is sometimes delayed or missed, which limits the group's ability to finance farm inputs or to provide loans for members.

The farmers do not hold title to the land they cultivate. Although there is an informal arrangement, there is no written agreement between the farmers and any recognised individual or organisation. Though there have been attempts to evict the farmers, they still feel that the land will be secure for many years to come. The association members reported that they sometimes meet with city authorities and other organisations to discuss their vegetable production activities. They send representatives to meetings at the Accra Metropolitan Assembly when invited (and participate in RUAF and SWITCH working groups. Despite this, the group feels it lacks the social recognition to make its views or situation known to the relevant organisations. However, the group has the cohesion to do everything possible to counter any threat to its activities. The informal group does not have linkages with other farmers' organisations. However, the group interacts with research organisations and government institutions. Information on agriculture practices and policies is made known to them by Ministry of Agriculture and IWMi. Input dealers also provide information on the proper use of agricultural inputs.

Harvesting the crops and marketing is mainly done by women market traders Photo: IWMi Ghana



Conclusion

The baseline study findings illustrate the importance of urban agriculture as a strategy for poverty alleviation, community building and social integration of disadvantaged groups. Despite the instability of the market and other constraints, the performance of vegetable production in Accra over the past five years has been good, and is providing sustainable employment and food security to the farmers and their households.

It is important to combine approaches that seek to secure sustainable and profitable use of water in urban agriculture with those focused on social inclusion and poverty reduction. In particular, programmes need to support capacity strengthening for group development, networking, marketing, financial management and other skills. Ultimately this would widen access to urban agriculture opportunities including access to water and improved water treatment and for facilitating contact between farmers groups and decision making bodies. These issues will be fully taken into account in the follow up activities in the frame of the SWITCH and RUAF projects.

Adrienne Martin

Natural Resources Institute, University of Greenwich, UK.
Email: a.m.martin@gre.ac.uk

Joep Verhagen (Corresponding Author)

IRC International Water and Sanitation Centre, The Netherlands
Email: verhagen@irc.nl

Luke Abatania

University of Ghana, Accra. Email: abat142002@yahoo.co.uk

End notes

1) This article is adapted from Nelson, V., Martin A., Sutherland, A., Casella, D., Verhagen J. (2007), Social inclusion and integrated urban water management, a concept paper, NRI/University of Greenwich & IRC, SWITCH programme. The information on Urban Agriculture and Social Inclusion is from the report of baseline study field work in Accra by Luke Abatania and Seth Agbottah.

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Improving Decision-making on Interventions in the Urban Water System of Accra

Suleiman Ibrahim¹
Henk J. Lubberding
P. Drechsel
Peter van der Steen

Management of water in an urban context has an important effect on the general health status of the city's population. Whereas a good water supply and sanitation improve people's health, the absence of these may cause serious health problems for thousands of citizens. Most sub-Saharan African cities are suffering from poorly managed urban water systems (water supply, sanitation, surface waters, groundwater). Wastewater, septage and solid waste are often not properly treated and disposed of, so that they become instrumental in the transfer of diseases from one person to another. Providing full collection and treatment is usually too expensive. Reuse of (treated) wastewater in urban agriculture may create some revenues to pay for the partial treatment of the wastewater, before it is used for irrigation. Simultaneously, use of this water in agriculture prevents it from polluting receiving waters. There is, however, also the danger of contamination of crops with pathogens.

Accra is one of these cities where the urban water system is far from optimal, and therefore a number of projects are underway to improve the situation. In the current situation, only a part of the expanding city has reliable access to drinking water. Moreover,

many citizens do not have access to well-functioning sanitation. Most people rely on septic tanks or some type of soakaways. The effluents from these tanks or from overflowing soakaways are discharged in open roadside drains. These drains may be an important disease transfer pathway. The small drains combine into larger ones, which ultimately end up in one of the lagoons that subsequently discharge into the ocean. Urban farmers use water from these drains to irrigate their crops, which include vegetables consumed uncooked.

For planners and decision makers it would make sense to invest the available budgets in upgrading the urban water system in such a way that the health effects are maximised. To determine which intervention is most effective, one could use a method called Quantitative Microbial Risk Assessment (QMRA). This method starts with an inventory of all possible transmission routes of infectious diseases that are somehow related to the urban water system, including wastewater reuse. It then predicts the number of disease cases for each transmission route. In the figure a schematic overview is presented of the different trans-

Situational Analysis - Social Inclusion

Accra and Alexandria

Overview Contents

Summary

The outcomes of the 4 studies are summarized in this PowerPoint presentation. The format is chosen to increase accessibility of the summary.

The summary presents:

- Main conclusions
- Main findings Accra
- Main findings Alexandria
- Conclusions.

Accra

The Accra situational analysis in Accra consists of two parts. The first part of the analysis was done at the city level and was done as part of the strategic planning process. This study carried out a Resource – Infrastructure – Demand – Access (RIDA) analysis for WASH services with a specific pro-poor focus.

The second part of the study carried out a detailed analysis of the exclusion mechanisms at the neighbourhood and family level. Guiding questions were: (a) where does you live (b) what does you have (c) who are you (d) what do you know.

Alexandria

Similar to Accra, the situational analysis in Alexandria consists of two parts. The first part of the analysis was done at the city level and was done as part of the strategic planning process.

The second part of the study was carried out at the site of the Alexandria demonstration projects and the outcomes of the study were used for the design of the demonstration project. Similar guiding questions were used as in Accra.

Main Conclusion

There is a range of mechanism that exclude people from sanitation, water, and flood protection. These can be found at all levels – the devil is often in the detail.

Mainstreaming groups needs a thorough understanding and a dedicated effort.

Social inclusion cannot be stand alone project but needs to be cross-cutting issue in other intervention.

Accra

Water Supply

- 56% of the population has indoor piped connection – only 28% of the poor have such connection.
- The better off pay 0.66 GH¢ per m³; the poor pay between 3 and 11.6 GH¢ per m³

Sanitation

- 54% of population has access to WC (with sewer connection) or KVIP; 46% has not access to improved facilities. Observations seems to suggest differently.
- WC and KVIP costs 0.75 and 6 GH¢ per month – unimproved facilities between 7 and 48 GH¢ per month

Alexandria

- Water coverage is almost 100% but sanitation coverage is lagging behind.
- Exclusion mechanism are mostly related to status of the area (informal settlements) and income.
- The study in the demonstration area points to problems around waste water drainage and deterioration of natural environment.

Social Exclusion

Social exclusion is not the same as poverty! Factors such as:

- Who you are (gender, ethnic background, religion)
- What you have (assets)
- Where you live (illegal settlements, proximity to networks)
- What you know (access to information)

Have been recognized to determine your well-being

Accra

Accra

- The Greater Accra Metropolitan Area covers an area of 1262 km sq. And has population of 2.7 million (census 2000). In 2030, Accra will have between 7.3 and 16.3 million inhabitants.
- 27% of the population is classified as poor or very poor – that is they earn less than 25% of the average national income.
- 54% of the population lives in compound housing and 46% of the population lives in rental accommodation.

Accra – water supply

- Water in Accra is provided through a range of service providers:
 - Ghana Water Company Ltd. Predominantly piped water supply
 - Private vendors – tanker operators, water vendors, and sellers of water sachets
 - Some community managed systems
 - Some self-service provision
- Higher and middle income
 - Mostly piped water connection
 - Installed overhead tanks to cope with water shortage and store water brought by tankers.
 - Installed booster pumps to cope with low pressure.
- Low income
 - Water vendors and public stand post
 - No coping mechanism and no limited storage place
 - Only 28% have piped connection

Accra Water Supply

Source	% of population	Costs (GH¢/m ³)
Household connection	51.2%	0.66 – 1.66
Vendor	37.7%	3.00 – 11.5
Tanker Service	1.3%	5.17-7.20
Sachet Water	8.6%	67 - 100
Self Supply	1.3 %	No data available

- The table above shows that the poorer section of the Accra population is paying for their water supply.

Accra - Sanitation

- Most sewage ends up untreated in the environment as only very few treatment plants work. Places where the pollution ends up tend to be places where nobody wants to live.
- The sewerage network predominantly covers the economic better-off areas.
- Holes in the urban sanitation chain are plugged by people that find employment that nobody else wants. For instance, people collecting night soil, sewerage workers, manual pit emptying, etc.

Accra Sanitation

Sanitation Facility	% of population	Costs month
WC with sewerage	33.2%	4.6 – 6.0
Pit Latrine	20.8%	0.75
Public Latrines	41.3%	7.50 - 22
Bucket latrine	3.2%	48
Open defecation	1.1%	No data available

- The table above shows that the poorer section of the Accra population is paying for access to sanitation services.

Accra – storm water management

- Urban flooding is serious problem in Accra and affects the low lying area where the poor live.
- Storm water drainage is also the main source of irrigation water for urban agriculture in Accra.

Exclusion mechanisms

There are a number of mechanisms that exclude certain groups for adequate access to urban WASH services. These mechanisms are found at city, neighbourhood, and family level. The RIDA analysis and the institutional mapping (work package 6.1) identified the following mechanisms at **city level**:

- regulations (Ghana Water only considers people with connection their clients).
- Status of poor settlements – no security of tenure
- Low social and political capital.
- Technology choice – WB opted for water born sewerage and covers mostly high and middle income areas.
- Block tariffs makes water more expensive in compound housing

Social Exclusion

The study carried out in Thesie and Mamobi-East investigated the access to basic WASH services and exclusion mechanisms with the households and neighbourhoods.

Access to services

The studies at neighbourhood level confirm the findings of the RIDA analysis. Importantly, it shows that the availability of public/community latrines does not mean that people have access to them. Costs, safety, queues, and opening hours limit the actual use of these latrines.

Flooding is a serious problems in specific low-lying locations. These floods go mostly unnoticed in the local media.



SWITCH

Exclusion mechanisms

Neighbourhood level

- Cartel of water vendors and local (political) leaders
- Parallel power structure of local chiefs – new comers are disadvantaged

Household/individual level

- Gender – women cannot inherit property
- Families lack capital to invest in water storage or connection

Alexandria

Exclusion mechanisms

National Background

- Egypt's urban population is rapidly increasing. An increase of 6 million between 1996 and 2006
- There are 10 ministries involved in the provision of drinking water; the government seeks to increase the role of the private sector in the sector.
- Around 96% of the population is connect to the water supply network. Though certain groups such as people living in illegal settlements tend to get excluded.
- The drinking water sector has an operation deficit of US\$ 1 billion and a debt of US\$ 1.5 billion with the national development bank.

Alexandria

- Population fluctuates between 4.1 (winter) and 6.1 (summer) million people. Population doubled in the last 30 years.
- Densities vary between 11 thousand and 132 thousand per square kilometre.
- In 1996 About 800 thousand people (25% of population) live in informal settlements : in 2006, 1.4 million people (41.8% of population) live in informal settlements.



SWITCH

Alexandria

- The government has undertaken extensive action to upgrade these informal areas.
- Around 97.5% of the population has access to potable water.
- However, getting a household connection is difficult for the poor as:
 - High connection fees that need to be paid a lump sum
 - Need to show proof of ownership to get a house connection.

Alexandria Sanitation

- Sanitation and sewage is lagging behind compared to water supply.
- Around 13% of the population is not connected to Sewerage network most of these people live in informal areas.
- Floods and poor drainage is an additional problems

Social exclusion in demonstration site

In addition to the side wide situational analysis, a more detailed study was carried out in the area where the demonstration project would be carried out. This study was part of the feasibility study that was carried out to support the design of the demonstration project.

Main characteristics of study area (Maw'a El-Sayadeen):

- Population - 80,000 living on 37.5 acres
- Sanitation and water services mostly through self provision and community efforts
- Large differences in income and quality of the living environment within the three areas.

Social exclusion in demonstration site

Water quality

- The deterioration of water quality of Lake Mariyut forms a major threat to the livelihoods of the fishermen
- Main problems related to the access to services such as water supply, drainage, sanitation, and electricity.
 - Around 5% of the population has not access to household water connection
 - Major problems with quality and maintenance of sewerage systems resulting in frequent flooding of streets.
 - No solid waste disposal

Social Inclusion

- The location and the informal status of the are important factors that contribute to the poor level of services.
- Households have limited physical, financial and human capital and their natural capital is under threat. The residents depending on the Lake for their livelihoods are highly vulnerable to income fluctuation and decline due to the deterioration in Lake Maryut.
- The gender roles are changing as more and more women need to work to contribute to the household income.
- Women were able to participate in discussions on WASH services

- The community has strong relationships outside the community; within the community relationships are mostly based on families ties.
- Strong willingness to participate in community activities but the limited resources are an important constraint.



018530 - SWITCH

Sustainable Water Management in the City of the Future

Integrated Project
Global Change and Ecosystems

Addendum Deliverable D6.3.4

Monica Sanz (UNAL)

Due date of deliverable: M
Actual submission date: M45

Start date of project: 1 February 2006

Duration: 60 months

Joep Verhagen
IRC International Water and Sanitation Centre

Revision [final]

Project co-funded by the European Commission within the Sixth Framework Programme		
Dissemination Level		
PU	Public	X
PP	Restricted to other programme participants (including the Commission Services)	
RE	Restricted to a group specified by the consortium (including the Commission Services)	
CO	Confidential, only for members of the consortium (including the Commission Services)	

Factores críticos para el éxito de la Asociatividad Empresarial en la cadena de valor del cuero.

Caso: Asociación de Curtidores de Villapinzón y Chocontá (ACURTIR)

Guillermo Andrés León¹

RESUMEN

La Asociatividad Empresarial es un mecanismo de cooperación inter-empresarial considerado un factor clave para el aumento de la competitividad y el mejoramiento del desempeño económico, social y ambiental de las empresas. Sin embargo, existen una serie de externalidades y condiciones organizacionales que no favorecen el establecimiento exitoso de este tipo de dinámicas de trabajo colectivo. Este artículo describe los principales resultados de la investigación desarrollada en torno al concepto de Asociatividad Empresarial, la cual indagó acerca del desarrollo de experiencias asociativas en la cadena de valor del cuero, a partir del estudio de caso de la Asociación de Curtidores de Villapinzón y Chocontá (Cundinamarca-Colombia).

Palabras Clave — Asociatividad, competitividad, valor agregado, capacidad productiva, cadena productiva del cuero.

1. INTRODUCCIÓN

Existe todo un panorama de oportunidades que reflejan los esquemas de integración para el mejoramiento potencial de la Competitividad en las PYMEs² (Porter, 2000), las cuales se asocian conformando redes empresariales que constituyen la base productiva de una nación (López, et al., 2007, p.7). Desde inicios de los 90's el gobierno nacional ha venido implementando políticas en búsqueda de la recuperación del sector del cuero, a partir de las cuales se han desarrollado – entre otras– experiencias de consolidación de esquemas asociativos, las cuales han tenido resultados positivos pero insuficientes frente a las necesidades y limitaciones que afrontan los empresarios en términos de sostenibilidad económica.

Después del desarrollo de varios proyectos de mejoramiento apoyados por instituciones regionales en Cundinamarca, se puso en evidencia la necesidad de trabajar en torno a la superación de las barreras competitivas que afrontan los empresarios y que les impiden mantener de forma sostenida los controles y procedimientos exigidos en materia ambiental. El largo recorrido histórico, así como el alto nivel de complejidad que manifiesta la problemática de los curtidores de Villapinzón y Chocontá llevó a la formulación del proyecto

IDEA³/Colciencias (I/C)⁴ denominado: “*Plan estratégico en las curtiembres de Villapinzón: competitividad e innovación en la cadena productiva del cuero: Producción más limpia, Asociatividad y desarrollo de alternativas de manejo y aprovechamiento de Residuos Sólidos*” a partir del cual se busca el mejoramiento de la situación competitiva y ambiental en la Asociación de Curtidores de los Municipios de Villapinzón y Chocontá (ACURTIR), a través de la articulación de los esfuerzos entre entidades relacionadas (proyecto SWITCH⁵, CAR⁶, Cámara de Comercio de Bogotá, CEINNOVA⁷ y ACICAM⁸, entre otras), consolidando una “Red Social-Empresarial de Cooperación” y haciendo énfasis en el mejoramiento del desempeño organizacional de las unidades productivas a nivel gerencial y operativo.

Esta investigación hace parte de la *Línea de Productividad y Competitividad* dentro de dicho proyecto y está ligada a la necesidad de evaluar el concepto de Asociatividad Empresarial a partir de la experiencia de ACURTIR. Este término, ha sido objeto de un uso reiterado para referirse a cierto tipo de estrategia colectiva aplicada principalmente por PYMEs en tiempos de globalización. Sus efectos positivos han sido corroborados en diversos contextos. No obstante, la investigación académica aún carece de una conciliación precisa sobre sus implicaciones y alcances.

Las experiencias desarrolladas sobre la cadena productiva del cuero en Colombia, han permitido afianzar la hipótesis acerca de que la Asociatividad resulta ser una estrategia favorable para mejorar el desempeño organizacional en las áreas económica, social y ambiental; No obstante, en la consolidación de un esquema asociativo intervienen una serie de factores críticos que determinan el éxito o fracaso del

³ Instituto de Estudios Ambientales, Universidad Nacional de Colombia. <http://www.idea.unal.edu.co/>

⁴ Para el resto del documento se usará la sigla I/C para referirse al proyecto ejecutado por el IDEA y cofinanciado por Colciencias, dentro del cual se enmarca este proyecto de tesis.

⁵ “El proyecto internacional SWITCH se propone lograr un cambio de paradigma en la gestión urbana del agua para conseguir sistemas de agua urbanos sostenibles, saludables y seguros. [...] realizado por un consorcio de 32 organizaciones de 13 países bajo la coordinación de UNESCO-IHE con la DG de Investigación de la Unión Europea”. <http://www.SWITCHurbanwater.eu/>

⁶ Corporación Autónoma Regional de Cundinamarca. Autoridad en materia ambiental del departamento de Cundinamarca. <http://www.car.gov.co/>

⁷ Centro Tecnológico para las Industrias del Calzado, Cuero y Afines. <http://www.CEINNOVA.org.co/>

⁸ Asociación Colombiana de Industriales del Calzado, El Cuero y sus Manufacturas. <http://www.ACICAM.org/>

¹ Candidato a MSc. en Administración, Facultad de Ciencias Económicas, Universidad Nacional de Colombia. galeonm@unal.edu.co

² Pequeñas y Medianas Empresas (PYMEs).

mismo. Ante esta condición, y dando por entendido que la idea de “cooperar para competir” es benéfica para la mayoría de industrias, este trabajo evalúa los interrogantes relacionados con las dificultades que afrontan los empresarios del eslabón del cuero para asumir este tipo de esquemas, así como los elementos que determinan su éxito competitivo.

Para ello se desarrolló un instrumento de evaluación que acompaña el despliegue metodológico de conformación y consolidación de esquemas asociativos. De acuerdo con el nivel de avance de la experiencia ACURTIR, correspondiente a una fase de *Estructuración*, se aplicó el instrumento obteniéndose resultados en lo concerniente al *Potencial Asociativo* del conjunto de empresarios.

2. METODOLOGÍA

El proyecto se desarrolla bajo un esquema de investigación exploratoria de carácter cualitativo. Seguidamente a la definición de una perspectiva epistemológica, se efectúa la consolidación de un resumen de la problemática señalando aspectos locales y sectoriales. Para esto último, se recurre a la metodología de *estudio de caso* aplicada sobre la experiencia de los empresarios de Villapinzón y Chocontá.

Se efectúa una revisión de antecedentes para la identificación de determinantes del éxito de proyectos asociativos en PYMEs. De esta forma, se estructura una herramienta que permite valorar estos factores críticos en el nivel *micro* y se procede a su aplicación sobre la experiencia de los curtidores de Villapinzón y Chocontá.

Este instrumento de evaluación del *Potencial Asociativo* de los empresarios de ACURTIR, se aplica a modo de encuesta a un grupo de *expertos* relacionados con la problemática⁹, se realiza la identificación prioridades estratégicas y el despliegue de proyectos colectivos para el caso estudiado, así como la identificación de aspectos generalizables.

La problemática de Villapinzón y Chocontá resulta representativa en el orden nacional, razón por la cual su evaluación se considera relevante para identificar algunos aspectos propios de las experiencias asociativas en el eslabón productivo. Sin embargo, también se confrontan las variables estudiadas con las tres experiencias más representativas en el contexto nacional, a saber: EL CERRITO (Valle del Cauca), LA MARÍA (Quindío) y SAN BENITO (Bogotá).

⁹ Los *expertos* fueron representados por la siguiente estructura de códigos: Representante Junta directiva ACICAM/gerente TERPIELES: (1I), Coordinador de proyectos CEINNOVA: (2I); Funcionaria Subdirección de Desarrollo Ambiental Sostenible CAR: (3I); Presidente Asociación de Curtidores LA MARÍA: (4R); Jefe de Gestión Ambiental y Laboratorio de Calidad Asociación de Curtidores de CERRITO: (5R); Gerente COOPICUR: (6R); Presidente ACURTIR: (7A); Integrante proyecto internacional SWITCH: (8A); Coordinador Productividad y Competitividad PROYECTO I/C: (9A); Coordinadora técnica PROYECTO I/C: (10A).

3. MARCO TEÓRICO/CONTEXTUAL

3.1. Las Estrategias Colectivas aplicadas por PYMEs

Grandes y pequeñas empresas afrontan sus retos de *integración, cooperación y competencia* con estrategias de diversa índole. En el caso de las PYMEs, las alianzas estratégicas contribuyen a agilizar la adaptación de las unidades productivas al cambio de las condiciones, propiciando el desarrollo y ajuste de ventajas competitivas que no podrían desarrollarse de forma aislada (Rosales, 1997). En América Latina, algunas PYMEs han logrado fortalecer relaciones con empresas complementarias y con otros actores en su entorno productivo a través de mecanismos asociativos (Dini, 1997; López-Cerdán, 1999).

El interés por “neutralizar” la competencia en ciertos ámbitos de las relaciones inter-organizacionales otorga un matiz particular al enfoque asociativo, orientándolo principalmente hacia el desarrollo de esquemas integrados por empresas en situación vulnerable. En Colombia los esfuerzos que se han desarrollado desde hace 15 años en el tema, han hecho evidente que la Asociatividad es una estrategia válida y efectiva para que las pequeñas y medianas empresas del sector empresarial puedan sobrevivir y desarrollarse frente a la globalización (Pallares, 2003).

3.2. La Asociatividad Empresarial

La Asociatividad es un “mecanismo de cooperación entre empresas medianas y pequeñas, en donde cada empresa participante, manteniendo su independencia jurídica y autonomía gerencial, decide voluntariamente participar en un esfuerzo conjunto con los otros participantes para la búsqueda de un objetivo común” (Rosales, 1997).

Se pueden reseñar ciertas características propias de la Asociatividad Empresarial:

Tabla 1. Características de la Asociatividad

El esquema establecido mantiene un sistema de incorporación voluntaria. Pero requiere la capacidad de aportar al grupo ¹⁰ .
Es un enfoque colectivo aplicable a cualquier industria o tipo de empresa.
Si bien busca resolver problemas conjuntos, cada empresa mantiene su autonomía.
Es desarrollado principalmente por pequeñas y medianas empresas ¹¹ .
Puede darse de distintos modos y tener múltiples propósitos.

Elaborado por el autor con base en López, et al. (2007); Pallares (2003) y la exploración de antecedentes teóricos y prácticos

La Asociatividad promueve el establecimiento de relaciones de cooperación. Esta relación inter-organizacional permite a las empresas por separado mejorar su competitividad y con

¹⁰ Es decir, empresas *auto-sostenibles* y con un grado mínimo de *competitividad* (López, et al., 2007, p.45).

¹¹ “El tamaño [de las empresas] puede ser importante, pero definitivamente no es determinante, porque la Asociatividad se puede presentar incluso entre medianas y grandes [...]” (López, et al., 2007, p.7).

ello aprovechar oportunidades que surgen en los mercados internacionales (ONUDI, 2004, p.1). Al tratarse de una opción competitiva, las dinámicas de competencia propias de una economía de mercado, no resultan ajenas. La coexistencia de estos dos conceptos constituye el fundamento central de la Asociatividad (Pallares, 2003). En la teoría de gestión, esta coexistencia de términos es denominada “coopetencia” (Nalebuff & Branderburger, 1996, p.31).

3.3. Competitividad y Asociatividad

La Asociatividad supone la coexistencia de dinámicas de cooperación y competencia en un escenario compuesto principalmente por PYMES. En este panorama, Hernández plantea que la Competitividad no debe ser abordada desde una “perspectiva competitiva ortodoxa”, sino que es fundamental hacerlo desde la lógica de la cooperación, lo cual permite una visión diferente del desarrollo, en donde lo importante no es la superación del adversario sino el aprovechamiento mutuo de capacidades (Hernández, 2007, p.114). Bajo este enfoque, la competitividad no solo puede ser vista como una capacidad de apropiación conjunta del mercado, sino como una condición sostenible y permanente, inherente al comportamiento de la empresa y del sistema económico y social (Castellanos et al., 2008, p. 60).

Por tanto, requiere de un enfoque analítico en donde se aborden al menos dos (2) aspectos: a.) *Capacidades organizacionales*¹² y b.) *Prioridades competitivas*¹³.

Bajo este enfoque, se procura un análisis de la competitividad a partir de factores correspondientes al nivel micro, implementando estudios de caso y datos cualitativos para evaluar capacidades y prioridades que determina el potencial competitivo de los esquemas asociativos en la cadena de valor del cuero.

Los referentes analíticos sobre Competitividad para el desarrollo de este proyecto son: *Desarrollo sostenible* (Glynn, Gary & Heinke, 1999; Hernández, 2007; Castellanos et al., 2008; Montoya & Montoya 2003), *el Modelo de competitividad basado en recursos* (Barney, 1991) y *el enfoque tradicional de prioridades competitivas* (Porter, 1996; Corbett & Wassenhove, 1993), *ventaja competitiva* (Porter, 1991, 1996; Coriat, 1997) y *cadena de valor* (Porter, 1985; Morrison, Pietrobello & Rabbellotti, 2008).

3.4. ACURTIR

¹² Barney (1991) plantea un “modelo basado en recursos” en el cual los atributos de la empresa solo son una fuente de *ventaja competitiva sostenible* cuando se constituyen en “recursos” que permiten explotar oportunidades y neutralizar amenazas del entorno de forma distintiva respecto a la competencia.

¹³ Un proyecto de Asociatividad Empresarial debe permitir evaluar *aspectos críticos* del conjunto de organizaciones, y asumir bajo un orden de preferencia ciertos “procesos exclusivos” o *prioridades competitivas*, que permiten consolidar *ventajas competitivas*. Por tanto, la Asociatividad Empresarial es considerada también una *estrategia competitiva*.

La siguiente tabla reseña información relevante de la Asociación de curtidores de Villapinzón y Chocontá:

<u>Tabla 2. Asociación de curtidores de Villapinzón y Chocontá.</u> <u>ACURTIR. Información relevante.</u>	
<i>Misión:</i>	Somos una asociación de microempresarios del cuero, cuya actividad es desarrollar, producir y comercializar cueros terminados y semi-terminados de la más alta calidad. ACURTIR está comprometida con la preservación de la cuenca alta del río Bogotá, para lo cual ejerce control en los procesos productivos de sus asociados.
<i>Visión:</i>	La visión de ACURTIR es consolidarse como la asociación de industriales del curtido líder del país, reconocidos por su innovación en procesos y productos, y su compromiso con el desarrollo ambiental, económico y social.
<i>Proyectos:</i>	PROYECTO SWITCH: “EL MANEJO SOSTENIBLE DEL AGUA EN LAS CIUDADES DEL MAÑANA”. <i>Programa de la UNESCO-IHE.</i> 2006-2010
	PROYECTO: IMPLEMENTACIÓN DE PLANES DE MANEJO AMBIENTAL Y EMPRESARIAL EN LAS CURTIEMBRE DE VILLAPINZÓN Y CHOCONTA. <i>Cámara de Comercio de Bogotá.</i> 2004-2005
	CAPACITACIÓN Y ACOMPAÑAMIENTO TÉCNICO EN PRODUCCIÓN MÁS LIMPIA AL SUBSECTOR CURTIEMBRES. <i>Corporación Autónoma Regional.</i> 2008-2009
	PROYECTO “Plan estratégico en las curtiembres de Villapinzón: competitividad e innovación en la cadena productiva del cuero (Producción más limpia, Asociatividad y desarrollo de alternativas de manejo y aprovechamiento de Residuos Sólidos)”. <i>COLCIENCIAS.</i> 2009-2010

Construido con base en IDEA (2009)

4. INSTRUMENTO DE EVALUACIÓN

De acuerdo con lo anterior, se desarrolló un instrumento que pretende constituirse en una herramienta de gestión articulada al *despliegue metodológico* de un proyecto asociativo de red horizontal (fig.1). Su objetivo es facilitar la valoración de aspectos cualitativos que determinan el desarrollo de la Asociatividad Empresarial, e identificar las categorías fundamentales sobre las cuales se debe hacer un mayor énfasis a la hora de configurar dinámicas de integración empresarial exitosas entre PYMES. Para tal fin, se establecieron una serie de *factores críticos de éxito* que pueden ser evaluados en cada una de las etapas de cualquier proyecto asociativo y que resultan determinantes en el desempeño de este tipo de experiencias colectivas:

Etapas (Fase) en el desarrollo de un proyecto asociativo		Factores Críticos de éxito		Categoría de Análisis		Tipo de Evaluación		Aplicabilidad del Instrumento		Valoración del Potencial Asociativo		Lista de Chequeo		Indicadores			
Estructuración del Proyecto Asociativo	1. Auto-diagnóstico y conformación (por Empresa, ex-ante)	Procesos de innovación Comportamiento en el mercado Equipos y maquinaria especializada Acceso a Servicios públicos y Transporte Conocimiento e Información Comunicación efectiva y diálogo Plataforma documental Actividades conjuntas no-comerciales Conocimiento previo y disposición a cooperar Formalidad empresarial Liderazgo empresarial Visión empresarial Formación académica Capacidad técnica para generar valor agregado Estandarización productiva Acceso a financiación Auto-sostenibilidad/Capacidad de Inversión Confianza Visión conjunta Compromiso Presencia de Organizaciones gestoras acompañantes Rigurosidad de en la aplicación de la Normatividad	a. Capacidad de Actualización b. Infraestructura c. Mecanismos de información d. Experiencia en Interacción e. Cultura organizacional f. Capacidad productiva g. Gestión financiera h. Capital Social i. Externalidades Críticas	Diagnóstico Proyección	Verificación	Monitoreo	Medición de Desempeño	Alcance del Instrumento	Aplicable a todo grupo de PYMEs gestando un proyecto asociativo.	No generalizable, los sistemas de monitoreo atienden a realidades específicas de cada esquema asociativo.	Valoración del Potencial Asociativo	Lista de Chequeo	Indicadores				
	2. Constitución y afianzamiento del grupo (por Grupo)																
	3. Coordinación y Concertación (Por Asociación)																
	4. Co-producción (Por Asociación, ex-post)																
Esquema Asociativo consolidado	Existencia de: Mecanismos de Gestión y Plan Estratégico																
	Eficiencia Colectiva																

Fig.1. Esquema general del Instrumento

4.1. Durante las fases 1(Auto-diagnóstico y conformación) y 2(Constitución y afianzamiento del grupo) se desarrolla una valoración ex-ante de las condiciones propias del colectivo de empresarios. Esta medida se denomina *Potencial Asociativo*. La medición del Potencial Asociativo permite

diagnosticar las condiciones previas y proyectar acciones de mejoramiento.

4.2. En la fase 3 (Coordinación y Concertación) se verifica la existencia de unos requisitos mínimos para la consolidación real del esquema. Esta evaluación es aplicable a cualquier esquema colectivo y permite identificar si realmente se encuentra consolidado.

4.3. Finalmente, en la fase 4 (Co-producción) se formulan unos indicadores que permiten valorar el desempeño del esquema asociativo de acuerdo con las expectativas particulares de cada caso. El desempeño obtenido en este último ejercicio define los niveles de *eficiencia colectiva* obtenidos por el esquema, que constituyen la evidencia de su aporte al incremento de la competitividad.

De acuerdo con el estado de avance del proyecto asociativo ACURTIR, únicamente se aplicó a la *Etapas I (Estructuración del Proyecto Asociativo)*. Allí se busca identificar las condiciones requeridas para garantizar la capacidad de los empresarios de generar aportes concretos en el marco de una asociación productiva (Diagnóstico). Igualmente, a partir de los resultados, permite considerar sobre nueve (9) categorías, algunos beneficios potenciales del esquema Asociativo (Proyección) y determinar prioridades estratégicas.

5. RESULTADOS

A continuación se reseñan los resultados de la aplicación del instrumento de evaluación del Potencial Asociativo sobre las 12 curtiembres pertenecientes a ACURTIR:

5.1. Diagnóstico:

Los resultados obtenidos se plantean de acuerdo con los criterios presentados en la figura 2.

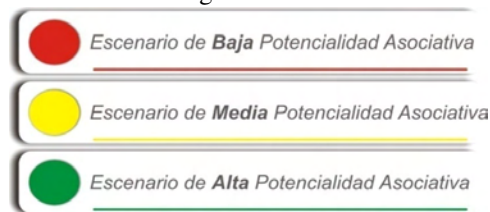
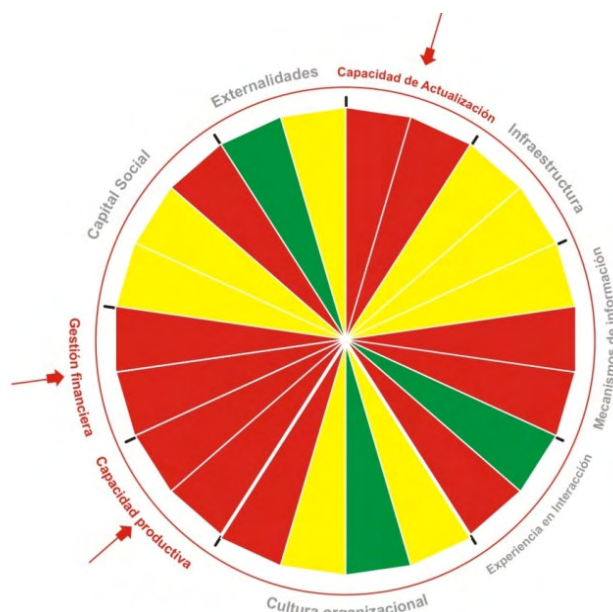


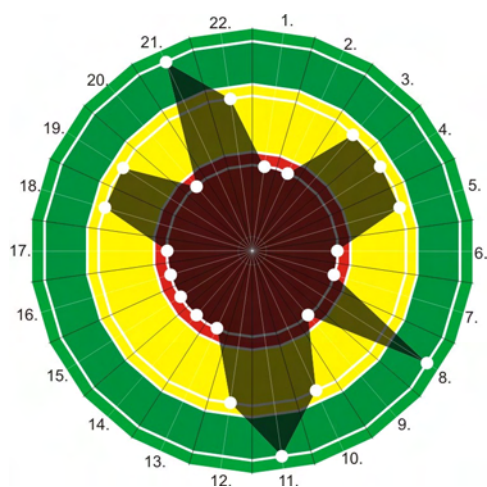
Fig. 2. Escenarios de Potencialidad Asociativa.

Las categorías de Baja Potencialidad Asociativa en ACURTIR son: *Capacidad Productiva*, *Capacidad de Gestión Financiera* y *Capacidad de Actualización*. Ninguno presenta Alta Potencialidad y solo la *Infraestructura* presenta *Potencialidad Media*. Las categorías restantes se clasifican de *Media* a *Baja* potencialidad en el siguiente orden: *Externalidades críticas*, *Capital Social*, *Cultura Organizacional*, *Experiencia en Interacción*, *Mecanismos de Información*.



Gráfica 1. Diagnóstico General ACURTIR por categorías.

Por su parte, los factores críticos¹⁴ de Alta Potencialidad Asociativa son: *Presencia de actividades conjuntas no comerciales, Liderazgo empresarial y Presencia de organizaciones Gestoras Acompañantes.*



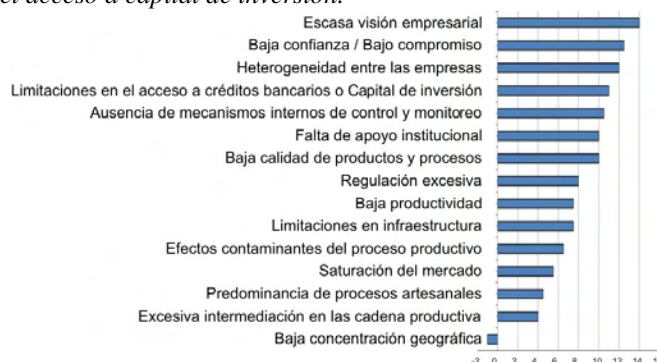
Gráfica 2. Diagnóstico General ACURTIR por factores críticos.

5.2. Comparación sectorial:

Los principales aspectos que limitan la consolidación efectiva de un esquema asociativo en la cadena del cuero son

¹⁴ Los factores críticos han sido estructurados de la siguiente forma: 1.Procesos de innovación, 2.Comportamiento en el mercado, 3.Equipos y maquinaria especializada, 4.Acceso a Servicios públicos y Transporte, 5.Conocimiento e Información, 6.Comunicación efectiva y diálogo, 7.Plataforma/documentación, 8.Actividades conjuntas no-comerciales, 9.Conocimiento previo y disposición a cooperar, 10.Formalidad empresarial, 11.Liderazgo empresarial, 12.Visión empresarial, 13.Formación académica, 14.Capacidad técnica para generar valor agregado, 15.Estandarización productiva, 16.Acceso a financiación, 17.Auto-sostenibilidad/Capacidad de Inversión, 18.Confianza, 19.Visión conjunta, 20.Compromiso, 21.Presencia de Organizaciones gestoras acompañantes, y 22.Rigurosidad de en la aplicación de la Normatividad.

en su orden: 1. *La Escasa Visión Empresarial*; 2. *La Baja confianza y el bajo compromiso de los empresarios*; 3. *La Heterogeneidad entre las Empresas*; y 4. *Las limitaciones en el acceso a capital de inversión.*

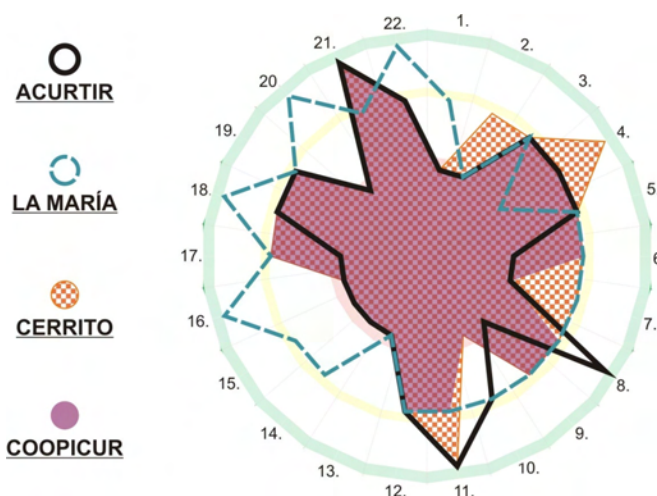


Gráfica 3. Aspectos que limitan la Asociatividad Empresarial en la cadena del cuero.

Adicionalmente, los *expertos* consultados plantearon algunos factores adicionales que se reseñan a continuación:

- *Presencia de conflictos históricos entre los empresarios y la comunidad.*
- *Informalidad Empresarial.*
- *Falta de estímulos tributarios / o incentivos reales.*
- *Falta de visión estratégica colectiva.*
- *Falta de políticas claras y específicas sobre el micro-industrias y el clusters.*
- *Falta de apoyo institucional en cuanto al acompañamiento de procesos asociativos.*

Este análisis se efectuó considerando el escenario inicial de las experiencias asociativas. Se aplica a la *Etapa I*, de modo que se hacen comparables respecto a la experiencia de ACURTIR.



Gráfica 4. Cruce de Diagnósticos Generales ACURTIR, LA MARÍA CERRITO y COOPICUR, por factores críticos.

El conjunto de experiencias evaluadas plantea escenarios plenamente coincidentes en 5 de los 22 factores posibles. Estos son: *Equipos y maquinaria especializada, Conocimiento*

e información, visión empresarial, formación académica y visión conjunta. Todos estos pertenecientes a escenarios de Media y Baja Potencialidad Asociativa.

Las mayores coincidencias en términos de potencialidad asociativa se dan entre las experiencias de ACURTIR, CERRITO y COOPICUR, las cuales coinciden en 11 factores, correspondientes principalmente a las categorías *Capacidad Productiva* y *Externalidades Críticas*.

La experiencia de LA MARÍA refleja notables diferencias respecto al resto de la muestra. Hoy en día, aunque todos los esquemas evaluados presentan inconvenientes en materia de desempeño económico, LA MARÍA es la que refleja mejores perspectivas. Es la única experiencia asociativa de curtiembres en Colombia que presenta avances consolidados en lo relacionado a la superación del conflicto medioambiental. El diagnóstico refleja una mayor potencialidad asociativa de LA MARÍA en casi todas las categorías y apenas niveles equivalentes en aspectos como la *Cultura Organizacional* y *Experiencia en Interacción*.

De los 22 factores evaluados, tan solo en la categoría *Infraestructura* se aprecia un punto de inferioridad de LA MARÍA respecto al conjunto de experiencias evaluadas. Este aspecto es *el acceso a servicios públicos y transporte*, en el cual ACURTIR y COOPICUR mantienen una *Potencialidad Media* y CERRITO *Alta*.

Los principales factores que distinguen favorablemente la calificación de LA MARÍA son: *acceso a financiación y cumplimiento de compromisos*. Estos factores reflejan una *Alta Potencialidad Asociativa* que contrasta con las otras tres (3) experiencias evaluadas con *Baja Potencialidad* en los mismos campos. En segundo orden, *la estandarización productiva, la capacidad técnica de generar valor agregado y el desarrollo de procesos de innovación* correspondientes a escenarios de *Media Potencialidad* en LA MARÍA, contrastan con una *Baja Potencialidad* manifiesta en todos los otros casos.

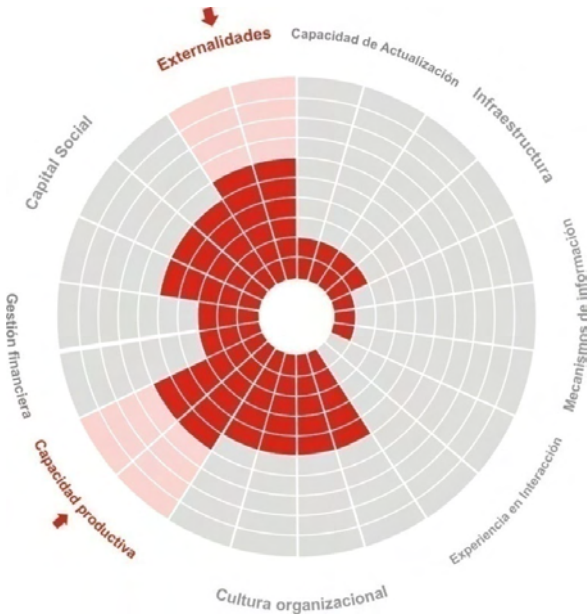
Las experiencias se pueden clasificar de la siguiente forma:
LA MARÍA: 3 Aspectos críticos negativos de Baja Potencialidad Asociativa.
CERRITO: 7 Aspectos críticos negativos de Baja Potencialidad Asociativa.
COOPICUR: 9 Aspectos críticos negativos de Baja Potencialidad Asociativa.
ACURTIR: 11 Aspectos críticos negativos de Baja Potencialidad Asociativa.

Teniendo en cuenta que las evaluaciones se hicieron sobre el estado inicial de cada grupo de empresarios participante del proyecto asociativo, se puede señalar que la situación actual de los esquemas evaluados corresponde fielmente a la clasificación previa. LA MARÍA se distinguió por la

capacidad de acceso a recursos financieros que le permitieron dar cumplimiento a los compromisos asumidos respecto a los entes gubernamentales y en esta medida, situarse actualmente como un referente nacional en materia de consolidación exitosa de proyectos asociativos.

5.3. Proyección:

Una vez efectuado el diagnóstico, se determinaron las categorías sobre las cuales se deben enfocar de forma prioritaria los recursos de la organización en el marco de un esquema de trabajo colectivo.



Gráfica 5. Aspectos Prioritarios ACURTIR.

Los dos (2) aspectos determinados por los *expertos*, como aquellos que deben ser abordados de forma prioritaria son: la *Capacidad Productiva* y las *Externalidades Críticas*:

Tabla 3. Proyectos prioritarios ACURTIR		
	Categoría	Factores
Proyectos prioritarios de primer orden:	Capacidad Productiva	Capacidad técnica para generar valor agregado
	Externalidades Críticas	Estandarización productiva
		Presencia de organizaciones gestoras acompañantes
Proyectos prioritarios de segundo orden:	Cultura Organizacional	Rigurosidad en la Aplicación de la Normatividad
		Formalidad empresarial, Liderazgo empresarial, Visión empresarial, Formación académica
	Capital Social	Confianza, Visión conjunta, Compromiso

A partir de la clasificación previa, se determinó una proyección de acciones de mejoramiento de la competitividad en ACURTIR, a través del establecimiento de proyectos asociativos de carácter prioritario en las áreas mencionadas como *prioritarias de primer orden*:

5.3.1. Capacidad técnica para generar valor agregado y Estandarización productiva:

La Estandarización Productiva es un requisito para incrementar los niveles de valor agregado al producto y acceder por esta vía a los efectos benéficos de un esquema de trabajo colectivo. Para incrementarla se debe:

Ampliar conocimiento técnico especializado, Desarrollar capacidades para la ampliación de la cartera de productos (*Experto 2I*), establecer un estándar mínimo de calidad para los productos que pueda ser evaluado periódicamente de modo que los empresarios puedan ser calificados y acceder o no a proyectos de comercialización conjunta (*Experto 6R*) (*Experto 1I*: definir un estándar de calidad con las debidas certificaciones para cada producto). Este proceso debe ser acompañado de la incorporación de modelos administrativos básicos y Asesoría en gestión financiera para adelantar proyectos comerciales que conduzcan a la Generación de capacidades para el diseño y desarrollo de productos de acuerdo a requerimientos del mercado (*Experto 2I*) (*Experto 5R*: contar con asistencia técnica constante).

Se formularon tres (3) proyectos no excluyentes cuya consolidación depende del incremento de la capacidad técnica y la estandarización productiva:

- Compra conjunta de Insumos químicos y materia prima (pieles crudas).*
- Comercialización conjunta.*
- Especialización productiva/Compra conjunta de maquinaria.*

5.3.2. Presencia /Ausencia de organizaciones gestoras acompañantes y Rigurosidad en la Aplicación de la Normatividad:

De acuerdo con la determinación de la categoría Externalidades Críticas como un tema prioritario, podemos aproximarnos desde el enfoque de competitividad sistémica (Esser et al., 1994) para señalar la existencia de elementos críticos de la problemática correspondientes a los niveles sistémicos Meso y Macro (Tabla 4). Este abordaje tiene el propósito de enunciar un conjunto de supuestos que modificarían aspectos estructurales del contexto actual que limita la consolidación efectiva de esquemas de trabajo colectivo en la cadena.

<i>Tabla 4. Aspectos prioritarios en materia de Política Pública y Acompañamiento Institucional.</i>	
<u>A nivel macro:</u>	<u>A nivel meso:</u>
Desarrollar una Política de crecimiento de la pequeña empresa como base productiva y de generación de empleo para la nación.	Fortalecer la articulación interinstitucional para el apoyo de las experiencias asociativas en la cadena del cuero. Dotar de una provisión especial de recursos presupuestales a las alcaldías y

Determinar a la cadena del cuero como un sector prioritario en la Agenda de Competitividad Nacional.	gobiernos de modo que puedan respaldar a los empresarios del eslabón curtiembres en la implementación de sistemas conjuntos de tratamiento de residuos.
La creación de una normatividad ambiental específica articulada a la política industrial de desarrollo sostenible para la cadena del cuero.	Crear un programa de fomento acelerado de la evolución tecnológica y la generación de productos de alto valor agregado para la cadena del cuero, con énfasis en la reducción del impacto ambiental a través de esquemas de Producción más Limpia.
Crear mecanismos de incentivo tributario para los esquemas de Asociatividad Empresarial entre pequeñas empresas.	Creación de una certificación medioambiental para las curtiembres. Creación de un “sello verde” distintivo para los productos obtenidos por esta vía.

6. CONCLUSIONES

Si bien la medición del Potencial Asociativo de ACURTIR plantea un cúmulo de restricciones para la consolidación de esquemas de trabajo conjunto, vale la pena resaltar que la industria de las curtiembres mantiene un potencial relacionado con su capacidad para responder de manera flexible a nichos específicos de mercado, debido principalmente a la baja complejidad tecnológica de su proceso productivo.

Los esquemas asociativos en la cadena del cuero abogan por la implementación de acciones conducentes a la eficiencia operacional en materia ambiental¹⁵. Dichas acciones deben ser acompañadas de proyectos que permitan a su vez, incrementar la eficacia organizacional bajo enfoques de competitividad y acceso a nuevos mercados. Solo de esta manera, las medidas adoptadas podrán ser sostenibles. Es a través de acciones sociales y económicas –no solo de control ambiental– como se podrá cumplir realmente con las premisas del desarrollo sostenible.

En las experiencias evaluadas, hay una dificultad generalizada para implementar acciones de monitoreo, lo cual limita la visibilidad de los resultados parciales. La ausencia de éstos, genera una consecuente pérdida de confianza que resulta crítica en los proyectos asociativos. Es necesario implementar medidas prácticas de monitoreo y proyectar acciones que reflejen resultados en el corto plazo junto a aquellas programadas en el largo. Poner en evidencia la efectividad de los proyectos asociativos es fundamental para superar los modelos mentales y el marco cultural predominante en donde prevalece el individualismo y el cortoplacismo.

Los esquemas de Asociatividad Empresarial no son válidos para cualquier circunstancia. Estos requieren que los

¹⁵ Métodos como la Producción más Limpia (PML) y las Buenas Prácticas Operacionales (BPO).

empresarios, sumado a su compromiso, reúnan unas condiciones mínimas de auto-sostenibilidad que permitan generar aportes concretos. De lo contrario, se puede llegar a promover erradamente la integración como una estrategia con miras a buscar subsidios o prebendas. El objetivo de la Asociatividad no es éste. Para el *Experto 6R* “las empresas en condición de quiebra no deben acceder a esquemas asociativos; en su lugar un esquema cooperativo o sobre la base de subsidios gubernamentales puede ser el camino para lograr auto-sostenibilidad y acceder nuevamente a espacios de autonomía administrativa en donde la Asociatividad si es posible”.

6.1. Futuras investigaciones:

Es necesario profundizar aún más en la investigación académica sobre el concepto de Asociatividad Empresarial para precisar sus alcances prácticos y epistemológicos. De esta forma, ampliar un soporte teórico que evite el amplio número de desaciertos hallados en la literatura, en donde se usa indistintamente el concepto para referirse a cualquier esquema cooperativo o de integración.

Un campo de escasa exploración en el estudio de la relación entre integración empresarial y competitividad es el que corresponde a la identificación de aspectos que pueden resultar potencialmente negativos para las empresas. Se ha identificado un gran número de beneficios de la integración, pero la pertenencia a un esquema asociativo también pueden conducir a situaciones como: inviabilidad en el establecimiento de futuras relaciones con empresas ajenas al esquema; disminución de las capacidades propias en campos específicos al participar de esquemas que restringen algunas áreas de competencia; deterioro de las relaciones con empresas participantes del esquema, por cuenta de conflictos relacionados con la disputa por áreas consideradas cruciales en el negocio, entre otras.

La configuración de esquemas asociativos sustentados en relaciones verticales en el marco de la cadena productiva, plantea retos de gestión que deben ser objeto de un abordaje metodológico, herramientas de diagnóstico y monitoreo particulares sobre las cuales la investigación es insuficiente. Asimismo, exige una exploración acerca de los rasgos propios del establecimiento de relaciones cooperativas de carácter asociativo entre grandes organizaciones y subordinadas.

El interés sobre la Asociatividad Empresarial en Latinoamérica y Colombia es creciente. Entidades públicas y privadas la promueven como una estrategia apropiada a través de la cual las PYMEs impulsarán el crecimiento económico. Sin embargo, esta investigación deja inquietudes respecto a la fortaleza de estos propósitos manifiestos. En momentos de crisis económica, se reivindica el potencial de la pequeña empresa para salir adelante, tener estabilidad, crecimiento y ser un motor generador de empleo en países como el nuestro. Pero

esta evidencia empírica “contrasta con la ciega posición de la economía y la gestión ortodoxas” (Hernández, 2007). El problema requiere entonces de un análisis sobre las asimetrías existentes en las relaciones empresariales, de modo que se identifiquen las barreras que determinan la ausencia de políticas tributarias, tecnológicas –entre otras– que realmente estimulen el avance de los colectivos de pequeñas empresas.

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ASOCIATIVIDAD EMPRESARIAL

Herramienta de Competitividad en la Cadena de Valor del Cuero

Guillermo Andrés León*
José Stalin Rojas**

Investigación desarrollada en el marco del proyecto IDEA/Colciencias denominado: "Plan estratégico en las curtiembres de Villapinzón: competitividad e innovación en la cadena productiva del cuero: Producción más limpia, Asociatividad y desarrollo de alternativas de manejo y aprovechamiento de Residuos Sólidos"

La Asociatividad Empresarial es un mecanismo de cooperación inter-organizacional. En la actualidad es considerado un factor clave para el aumento de la competitividad y el mejoramiento del desempeño económico, social y ambiental de las empresas. De acuerdo con las características estructurales del sector del cuero, la Asociatividad se constituye en una estrategia propicia, al punto de ser asumida como un componente básico de la Agenda de Competitividad Sectorial.

Sin embargo, existen una serie de externalidades y condiciones propias de las empresas que no favorecen el establecimiento exitoso de este tipo de dinámicas de trabajo colectivo. Este trabajo indaga sobre el desarrollo de experiencias asociativas en la cadena de valor del cuero, a partir del estudio de caso de las curtiembres de Villapinzón y Chocontá (Cundinamarca-Colombia).

Objetivo:
Evaluar la aplicación de metodologías de Asociatividad Empresarial implementadas en búsqueda del mejoramiento de la Competitividad en la Cadena de Valor del Cuero.

1. Se identificaron cuatro (4) fases genéricas en el desarrollo de un esquema asociativo cualquiera:

Fases genéricas del desarrollo de un esquema asociativo.		
Etapas	Fase	Actividades
I. Estructuración del Proyecto Asociativo	1. Auto-diagnóstico y conformación.	Los actores intercambian información, se efectúan análisis de los integrantes potenciales y su selección.
	2. Constitución y afianzamiento del grupo.	Identificación de Fuentes de apoyo, Elaboración del Proyecto conjunto, Constitución formal del esquema asociativo.
II. Esquema Asociativo consolidado	3. Coordinación y Concertación.	Se formula un plan de acción con metas individuales y colectivas, se efectúa la Conformación de un Equipo de decisión y se formalizan Compromisos, los actores actúan y operan en búsqueda de un mejoramiento continuo
	4. Co-producción.	Los diferentes actores se reúnen para desarrollar sub-productos que componen un producto en común.

INSTRUMENTO DE EVALUACIÓN DE LA ASOCIATIVIDAD EMPRESARIAL

2. Se determinó un Esquema de Evaluación:

Etapas (Fase) en el desarrollo de un proyecto asociativo	Factores Críticos de éxito	Categoría de Análisis	Tipo de Evaluación	Aplicabilidad del Instrumento
Estructuración del Proyecto Asociativo	1. Auto-diagnóstico y conformación (por Empresa, ex-ante)	a. Capacidad de Actualización	Diagnóstico Proyección	Aplicable a todo grupo de PYMES, gestando un proyecto asociativo.
	2. Constitución y afianzamiento del grupo (por Grupo)	b. Infraestructura		
Esquema Asociativo consolidado	3. Coordinación y Concertación (Por Asociación)	c. Mecanismos de información	Verificación	No generalizable, los sistemas de monitoreo atienden a realidades específicas de cada esquema asociativo.
	4. Co-producción (Por Asociación, ex-post)	d. Experiencia en Interacción		
		e. Cultura organizacional	Monitoreo Medición de Desempeño	Valoración del Potencial Asociativo
		f. Capacidad productiva		
		g. Gestión financiera	Monitoreo Medición de Desempeño	Lista de Chequeo
		h. Capital Social		
		i. Externalidades Críticas	Monitoreo Medición de Desempeño	Indicadores
		Existencia de: Mecanismos de Gestión y Plan Estratégico		
		Eficiencia Colectiva		

Este instrumento pretende constituirse en una herramienta de gestión articulada al despliegue metodológico de un proyecto asociativo de red horizontal. Su objetivo es facilitar la valoración de aspectos cualitativos que determinan el desarrollo de la Asociatividad Empresarial, e identificar las categorías fundamentales sobre las cuales se debe hacer un mayor énfasis a la hora de configurar dinámicas de integración empresarial exitosas entre PYMES.

2.1. El esquema comprende una fase de Diagnóstico y Proyección que permite valorar el Potencial Asociativo:

La medición del **Potencial Asociativo** se aplica durante la Etapa I: Estructuración del Proyecto Asociativo. Permite evaluar algunos elementos críticos para propiciar la efectividad de los procesos asociativos a nivel empresarial. El propósito es que esta herramienta se convierta en una fuente de información relevante a la hora de formular esquemas de trabajo colectivo inter-empresarial y estrategias competitivas sectoriales.

2.2. Fase de Verificación:

Nivel de Consolidación	Factores Críticos
1	Esquema de financiación
2	Plan de acción con alcances de corto y largo plazo
3	Protocolos de operación
4	Formalización de vínculos establecidos con otros actores
5	Empoderamiento/cumplimiento de compromisos internos
6	Objetivo comercial definido (Mercado Objetivo)
7	Proyectos específicos operando

2.3. Fase de Monitoreo:

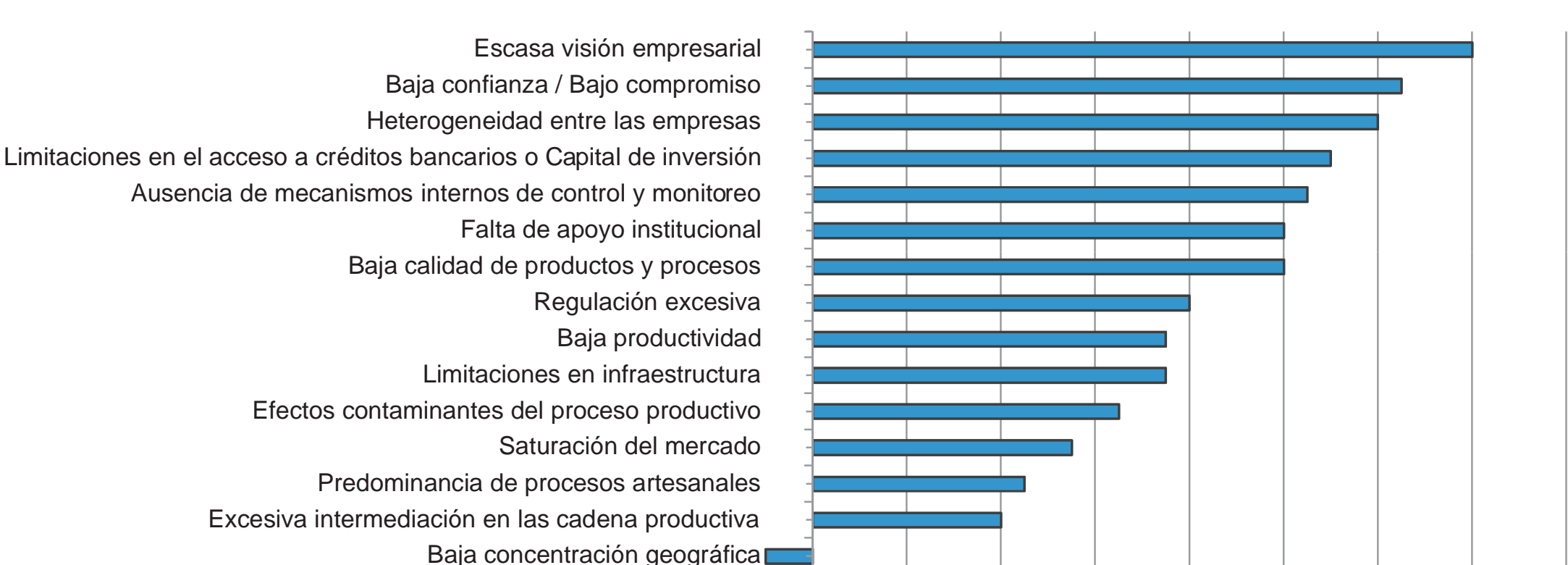


RESULTADOS / MEDICIÓN DEL POTENCIAL ASOCIATIVO

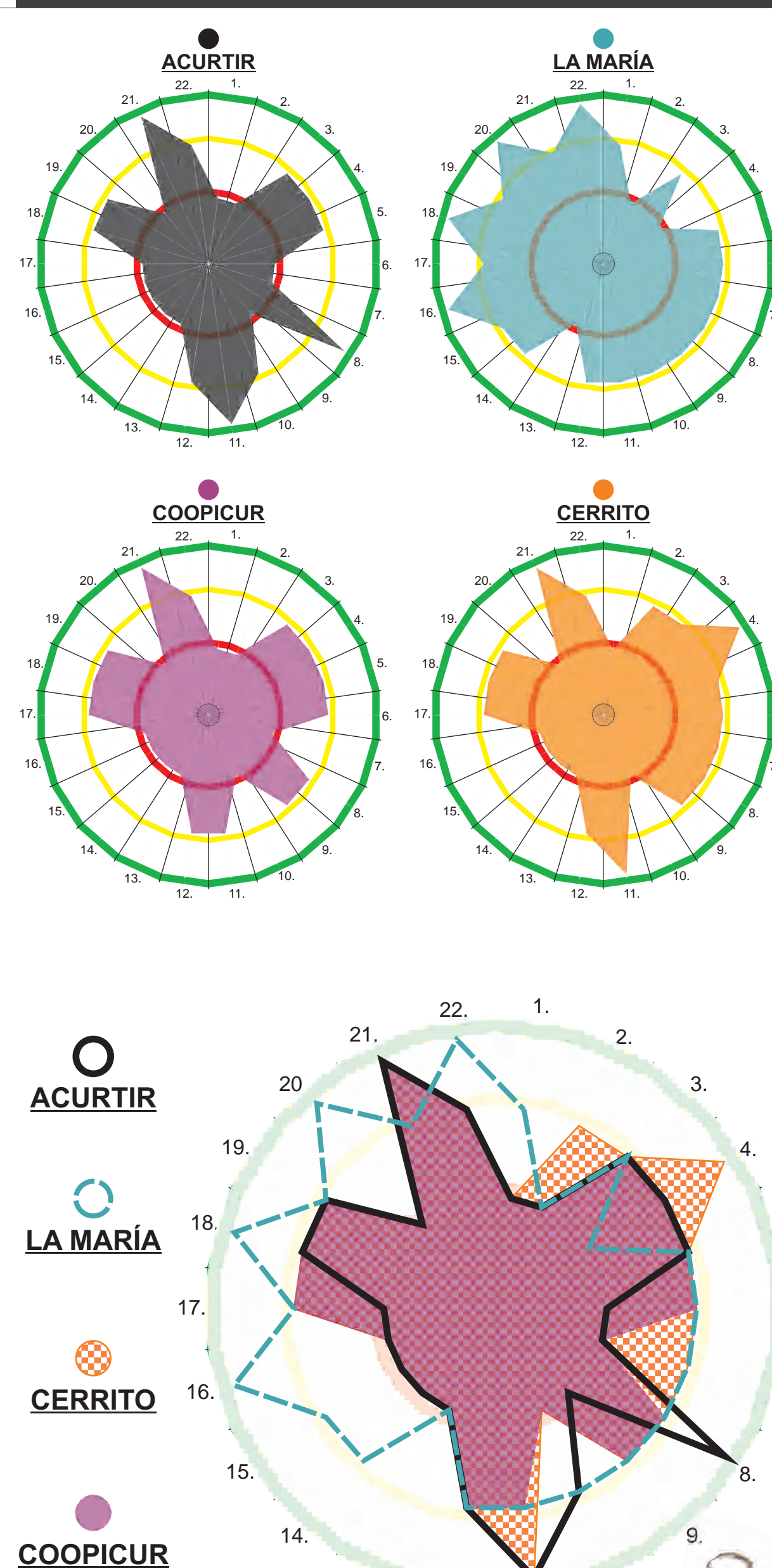
3. A continuación se reseñan algunos resultados de la aplicación del instrumento en la Fase de Diagnóstico y Proyección en la experiencia asociativa de Villapinzón y Chocontá (Cundinamarca), así como un análisis comparativo respecto a otras experiencias representativas del eslabón curtiembres en el contexto nacional (El Cerrito, en el Valle del Cauca; La María, en el Quindío; y San Benito-Coopicur, en Bogotá):



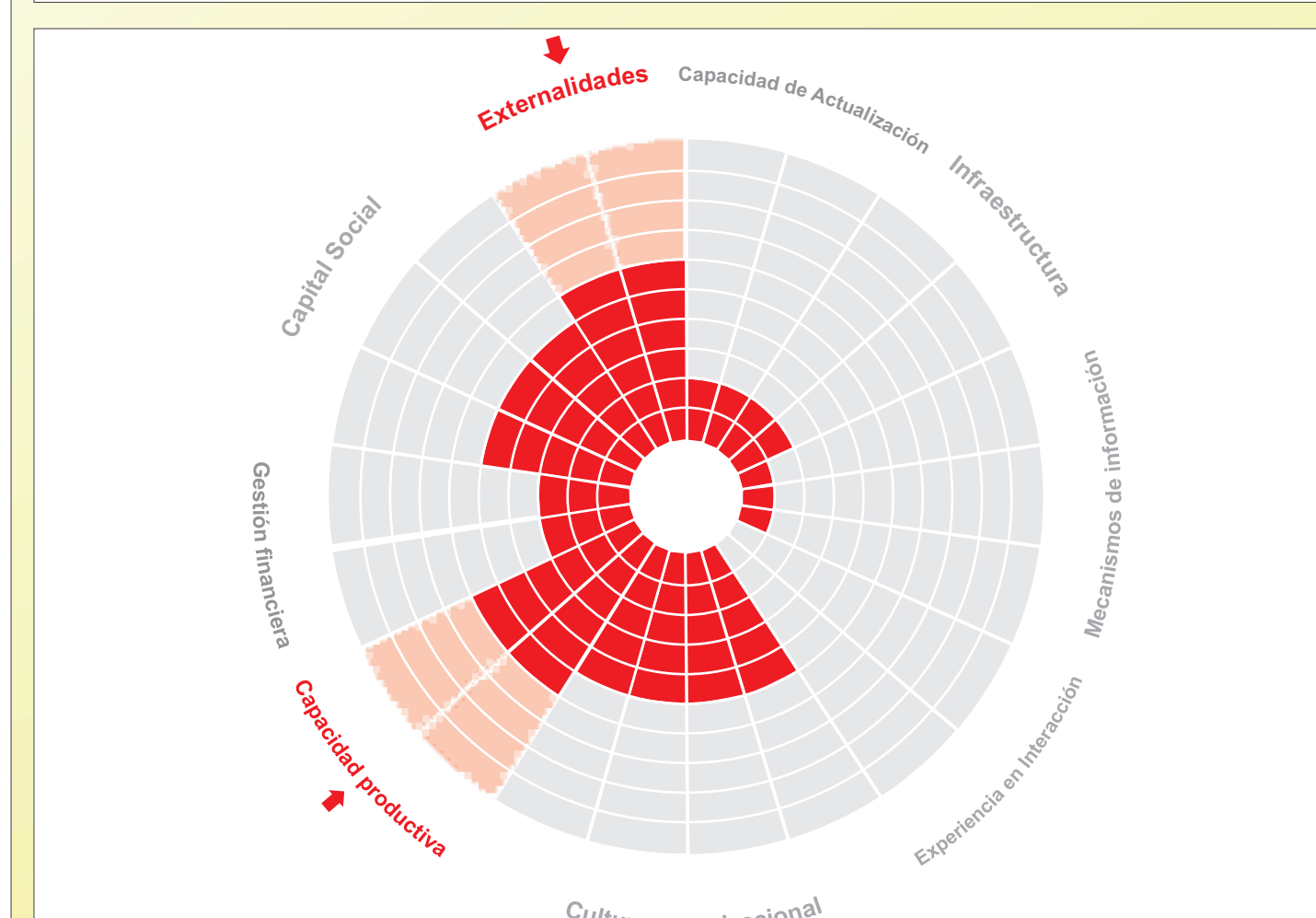
Las **categorías** de Baja Potencialidad Asociativa en ACURTIR son: Capacidad Productiva, Capacidad de Gestión Financiera y Capacidad de Actualización. Ninguna presenta Alta Potencialidad y solo la Infraestructura presenta Potencialidad Media. Los **factores críticos** de Alta Potencialidad Asociativa son: Presencia de actividades conjuntas no comerciales, Liderazgo empresarial y Presencia de organizaciones Gestoras Acompañantes.



Los principales aspectos que limitan la consolidación efectiva de un esquema asociativo en la cadena del cuero son en su orden: 1. La Escasa Visión Empresarial; 2. La Baja confianza y el bajo compromiso de los empresarios; 3. La Heterogeneidad entre las Empresas; y 4. Las limitaciones en el acceso a capital de inversión.



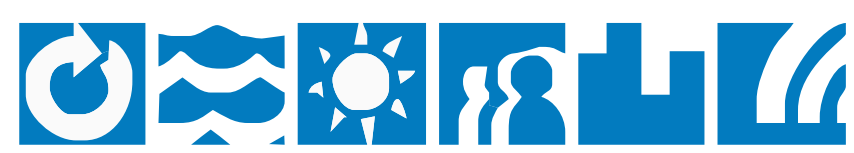
El conjunto de experiencias ACURTIR, CERRITO y COOPICUR, plantea escenarios plenamente coincidentes en 11 factores, correspondientes principalmente a las categorías Capacidad Productiva y Externalidades Críticas. La experiencia de LA MARÍA refleja notables diferencias respecto al resto de la muestra. Hoy en día, es la única experiencia asociativa en Colombia que presenta avances consolidados en lo relacionado a la superación del conflicto medioambiental. Los principales factores que distinguen favorablemente su calificación son: 1.) Acceso a financiación y cumplimiento de compromisos, y 2.) Estandarización productiva, Capacidad técnica de generar valor agregado y Desarrollo de procesos de innovación.



Los dos aspectos que deben ser abordados de forma prioritaria son: **Capacidad Productiva** y **Externalidades Críticas**. En primer lugar, se manifiesta la preponderancia de la estandarización de capacidades técnicas, como punto de partida para la Asociatividad. Ésta debe ir acompañada de un enfoque de mercado, que permita el desarrollo de un lenguaje común y conduzca a la posibilidad de determinar bajo especificaciones técnicas precisas, requisitos de producción, compras o ventas de carácter conjunto. Además, se identificó que existe un elevado peso relativo de los factores críticos externos, entre los cuales los expertos señalaron: La falta de visión colectiva (sectorial), la ineficacia de la política industrial (nacional), la ausencia de mecanismos reales de incentivo a la Asociatividad Empresarial (nacional), y la rigurosidad en la aplicación de la normatividad ambiental que propicia desequilibrios en la competitividad regional (nacional y sectorial).

*Primer Autor: galeonm@unal.edu.co, Candidato a MSc en Administración, Universidad Nacional de Colombia

**Segundo Autor: jsrojasam@unal.edu.co, Profesor, Coordinador de la Carrera de Administración de Empresas, Universidad Nacional de Colombia ENIP, Bogotá/Colombia 02/12/2009



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INSTITUTO DE ESTUDIOS AMBIENTALES - IDEA

Assessment of the “associativeness” a strategy of competitiveness in the leather tanning industry

GUILLERMO ANDRÉS LEÓN

Msc. Candidate of Business Administration

galeonm@unal.edu.co

Bogota, Colombia

This dissertation is part of the project called: “Strategic Plan in the leather tanning industry in Villapinzón: competitiveness and innovation in the leather industry”. This project is aimed at improving the environmental conditions and competitiveness in the tanning industry in the regions of Villapinzón and Choconta (Colombia).

After years of experience in the search for more environmentally friendly actions in the tanning industry, it has been found that the concept of “associativeness” is the key to reach sustainability. The research goal is to pinpoint which are the major factors controlling the definition of mechanisms of associativeness, under the hypothesis that an enhancement of the link between the people involved at different levels will improve the current situation in terms of environment and socio-economic issues.

General view of Villapinzon



Tanners of Villapinzon



ecologic compost



In Latin-American, many efforts have been put to strengthen the medium-size industry. In Colombia many symposiums and other academic events have taken place to promote and evaluate the subject of “associativeness” as a strategy to overcome production and environmental problems.

Nowadays, when the economy is broken down, many academics emphasize that small companies are the key of growth, stability and the creation of new jobs. Small and medium size enterprises represent 90% of the Colombian enterprises, account for 38.7% of the GDP and provide 57% of the jobs.

It is worth noting that associative efforts require concrete objectives. They may be related to the development of scale economies, reduction of production costs, improvement of technology, shared knowledge and the improvement of negotiation skills, so that the idea of working together in a structured network may boost the industry in the short and long term. In the particular case of Villapinzon and Choconta, it is expected that the construction of the new waste treatment plant is the starting step of this process.



Water treatment plant

ACURTIR, an association of people related to the business of leather tanning, was funded in the municipality of Villapinzon. This association promotes the integration between small and medium-size enterprises around the technical aspects of the industry, the reduction of the negative environmental impacts, the increase in negotiation capability and the acquisition of equipment.

acurtir