INDIGENOUS ORGANISATIONS AND NORTHERN NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS IN ECUADOR – PARTNERSHIP?

Master of Arts
University of Technology Sydney

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Statement of Originality

I certify that the work presented in this thesis is original, and has not previously been submitted for a degree, nor has it been submitted as part of requirements for a degree.

I also certify that any help I have received in the preparation of the thesis, together with all information sources used, have been acknowledged within the thesis.

Jacqueline Louise Carrier
Acknowledgements

After ten years work as a development practitioner in a variety of contexts, this thesis is an attempt to further explore those questions to which I found no easy answers in my daily work. I would like to thank the following people who have either influenced or supported me in this seeking of answers.

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Noel and Gerhardt Pearson have also influenced this research. While working for them in Cape York, and being part of their way of doing development with communities, I was stimulated to want to explore how things work in other contexts, and whether there are other ways of 'doing development' with Indigenous people.

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For the case study in Ecuador I would particularly like to thank Mario Melo, who was also grappling with ways that development practitioners' can effectively support Indigenous organisations, and took part in numerous stimulating exchanges. Mario also used his personal contacts to organise interviews for me with many, often inaccessible, Indigenous leaders in Ecuador and I thank him for that.
I am also grateful to Dr Martin Scurrah, former Regional Director of Oxfam America, who organised the initial contact with CDES, and provided interesting contributions to my research.

I am particularly indebted to the Ecuadorian Indigenous leaders, specifically Hilda Santi and Efren Calapucha, who, together with the representatives of NNGOs in Ecuador, gave generously their time and expertise, responding to questions in a thoughtful and open manner.

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<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amazon Defence Front</td>
<td>A federation of Indigenous and non-indigenous peoples based in the Northern Amazon, formed to fight the petrol company Texaco.</td>
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<td>ARCO</td>
<td>North American petrol company which attempted to undertake exploration and extraction of petrol in the Southern Amazon in the late 1990s.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Block 24 Front</td>
<td>A grouping of Indigenous organisations in the Southern Amazon, formed to fight the Texan oil company Burlington.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Burlington</td>
<td>North American oil company which undertook exploration for oil in the Southern Amazon from 2000-2002</td>
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<tr>
<td>CESR</td>
<td>Centre for Economic and Social Rights – North American organisation, founder of CDES</td>
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<tr>
<td>CDES</td>
<td>Centro De Derechos Economicos y Sociales – Ecuadorian Intermediary Organisation</td>
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<tr>
<td>CGC</td>
<td>Argentine petrol company which attempted to undertake exploration and extraction of petrol in 2002 in the central Amazon without the consent of the traditional owners, the Sarayacu.</td>
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<td>CICC</td>
<td>The Indigenous Head Office for Communities of Conception – A Bolivian provincial level Indigenous organisation which covers 45 communities, and has sent staff to the Amazon School.</td>
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CONAIE The Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador. The national representative Indigenous organisation of Ecuador, CONAIE was formed via the creation of an alliance between ECUARUNARI and CONFENAIE in 1986. CONAIE features leaders elected tri-annually from regional and grassroots Indigenous organisations.

CONFENAIE The Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of the Ecuadorian Amazon. CONFENAIE was created in 1980, and united all Indigenous Amazonian peoples.

Earth Rights International North American NGO, which works with CDES to deliver the Amazon School, developed from its Burma School.

ECUARUNARI Ecuador Runacunapac Riccharimui. Formed in 1972, ECUARUNARI represents Indigenous peoples of the Sierra region, thus uniting several federations of the highlands.

ESCR Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

FEINE National Evangelical group of Indigenous peoples

FENAP Federation of Peruvian Achuar People – unites three organisations that represent around 10,000 Achuar.

FENOCIN National campesino organisation – a non-Indigenous body

FICSHA Federation of Shuar Centres - Formed in 1965-6 in the South and Central Amazon, FICSHA is one of the earliest indigenous organisations created in Ecuador.
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<th>Acronym</th>
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<tr>
<td>FINAE</td>
<td>The Interprovincial Federation of the Achuar Nationality - Regional representative organisation of the Achuar people of the Southern and Central Amazon. Note that FINAE changed their name to NAE, The Achuar Nationality of Ecuador, in late 2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIPSE</td>
<td>Independent Federation of the Shuar People of Ecuador</td>
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<tr>
<td>FOIN</td>
<td>Federation of Indigenous Organisations of Napo – a provincial level federation that was created in the late 1960s</td>
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<td>Ford Foundation</td>
<td>North American Foundation, the primary donor for the Amazon School</td>
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<td>FPIC</td>
<td>Free, Prior and Informed Consent</td>
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<tr>
<td>IBIS</td>
<td>A Dutch NGO with operational programs globally</td>
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<tr>
<td>ILO</td>
<td>International Labour Organisation</td>
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<tr>
<td>INGO</td>
<td>International Non-Governmental Organisation</td>
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<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-Governmental Organisation</td>
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<td>NNGO</td>
<td>Northern Non-Governmental Organisation</td>
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<tr>
<td>NPA</td>
<td>Norwegian Peoples’ Aid, a Norwegian NGO with global programs</td>
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The Organisation of Indigenous Peoples of the Colombian Amazon – Active in defending collective rights in Colombia, OPIAC has sent 10 students to the Amazon School

Organisation of Indigenous Peoples of Pastaza – based in Pastaza province in the Central Amazon

The AIDESEP Regional Organisation of Ucayali – A Peruvian regional organisation which represents 14 communities and 12 federations, and is a member of AIDESEP, the Peruvian National Indigenous Federation. ORAU has sent students to the Amazon School

National Indigenous political party, formed in 1996, with strong links to CONAIE

A North American NGO with programs only in Ecuador

Indigenous community based in the Central Amazon

Southern Non-Governmental Organisation

North American oil company, which in the process of extracting petrol from the Northern Amazon, dumped billions of gallons of toxic waste in the area over a twenty year period.
Glossary

Campesino A Latin American farmer or farm labourer. In Ecuador the term is generally applied to poor and non-indigenous people.

Capacity building “An endogenous course of action that builds on existing capacities and assets, and the ability of people, institutions and societies to perform functions, solve problems and set and achieve objectives” (Lopes and Thiesohn, 2004).

Cosmovision “The way a certain population perceives the cosmos or world. It includes assumed relationships between the human world, the natural world and the spiritual world. It describes the perceived role of supernatural powers, the relationship between humans and nature, and the way natural processes take place. It embodies the premises on which people organize themselves, and determines the moral and scientific basis for intervention in nature” (Haverkort et al, 2003).

Endogenous development Development based predominantly on local knowledge and resources, which may also integrate traditional and external knowledge and practices. (Haverkoort et al, 2003)

Indigenous While various definitions exist, Jose Martinez Cobo, United Nations Special Rapporteur of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, provided this working definition: “indigenous communities, peoples and nations are those which, having a historical continuity with pre-invasion and pre-colonial societies that developed on their territories, consider themselves distinct
from other sectors of the societies now prevailing on those territories, or parts of them. They form at present non-dominant sectors of society and are determined to preserve, develop and transmit to future generations their ancestral territories, and their ethnic identity, as the basis of their continued existence as peoples, in accordance with their own cultural patterns, social institutions and legal system.”

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<tr>
<th><strong>Intermediary organisation</strong></th>
<th>“National or regional NGOs that are generally staffed by professionals, provide funding or technical assistance to a range of grassroots organisations, and help communities other than their own to develop” (Fisher, 1993).</th>
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<td><strong>Intercultural</strong></td>
<td>“Occurring between two or more cultures, involving two or more cultures” (Merriam Webster Collegiate Dictionary, 2007).</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Mestizo</strong></td>
<td>Literally ‘mixed-blood’, in Ecuador this term is used to refer to peoples who are part latino and part indigenous.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Organisational development</strong></td>
<td>“A planned, systematic and participatory process of change intended to increase organisational effectiveness and develop a continuing capacity for learning” (INTRAC, 1999).</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Partnership</strong></td>
<td>“Joint commitment to long term interaction, shared responsibility for achievement, reciprocal obligation, equality, mutuality and balance of power” (Fowler, 2000).</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Plurinational</strong></td>
<td>Within the Indigenous movement in Ecuador, this is used to describe one nation legally acknowledging the existence of other nationalities or peoples within its territories, and according specific rights to those peoples.</td>
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List of Interviews

During the research conducted in Ecuador in July 2005, several interviews were conducted. All interviews were conducted using a semi-structured format, with a number of open questions to commence, which led to unstructured discussions. All interviews except two (which were conducted in English) were conducted in Spanish, and detailed notes in Spanish and English were taken. These notes remain in possession of the author of the research.

In Quito interviews were conducted with:

Mario Melo  Coordinator of Amazon Area Program and Lawyer for CDES

Celestino Wichum  Director of Amazon School project within CDES

Joanna Levitt  Fulbright Scholar working with CDES

Hilda Santi  President of the Tayjasaruta, the Sarayacu representative organisation

Efren Kalapucha  Director of Territories and Natural Resources, CONAIE

Natalia Wray  Regional Director of Norwegian Peoples’ Aid

Arturo Cevallos  Country Director of IBIS, a Dutch NGO

Belen  Country Director of Pachamama, an American NGO

Ruth Arias  Ecuadorian woman who works frequently with Indigenous organisations
In Puyo, in the Central Amazon, interviews were conducted with:

Ruben Samarin       Director of Lands and Territories, FINAE
Jorge Canolos       Director of Health, FINAE
Jose Gualinga       Director of International Relations of the Tayjasaruta, the Sarayacu representative organisation
Mario Grefa         President of OPIP

In Guatemala in September 2005, discussions were conducted with Martin Scurrah, who was at that time the Latin America Director of Oxfam America.
Abstract

This research explores the question ‘In a country where the Indigenous movement has been relatively successful, what were the interactions between international non-governmental organisations and Indigenous organisations?’ Sub questions include ‘What role did partnership play in these relationships?’, ‘How was capacity building done?’ and ‘What role did intermediary organisations play?’

Having worked internationally in NGO settings involving Indigenous people, in Africa, South East Asia, Latin America and Australia, I was aware that approaches such as partnership and capacity building are promoted but appear to be difficult to put into practice. I felt that it would be useful to look at the relationship between Indigenous organisations and International NGOs in a context where the Indigenous movement is considered to be relatively successful. I hoped that by exploring a context other than Australia I could identify relevant challenges, alternate ways of working, and whether there are any implications that are relevant to Australia.

The case study selected for analysis is that of the Indigenous movement of Ecuador, and its relationship with those International non-governmental organisations that support it, together with the role played by one of its strongest supporters, the intermediary Ecuadorian organisation the Centre for Economic and Social Rights (CDES). The research will explore the nature of the Indigenous movement, and the International NGOs that support the Indigenous movement, together with the relationships that exist between them.