



## Executive Summary

# Mapping Current Peruvian Social Movements

Project: *Social Movements and Poverty*

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## I. INTRODUCTION <sup>1</sup>

If one takes a moment to look over the events that have occurred in the past few months in Peru, then it could be said that the present Peruvian reality is characterised by conflicts, protests, and different groups demanding change and making their needs known. Such situations are grounded in social movements, and our specific intention for this research project, *Social Movements and Poverty*, when launched in October 2007, was to examine those movements closely and get a grasp of the entire context. The study is run out of the University of Manchester under the leadership of Anthony Bebbington, Ph.D. in geography and professor at the Institute of Development Policy and Management from that university, and Diana Mitlin, senior research associate from the same institute. In addition, the study is a comparison of the realities of Peru and South Africa. In Peru, a two person team from CEPES (Peruvian Centre for Social Studies) is in charge of the project, Martin Scurrah (team leader) and Claudia Bielich.

For purposes of this study, a social movement is defined as a process of politicized collective action (a process of mobilisation) whose purpose is to contest social relationships and dynamics of capital accumulation implicated in the creation and reproduction of poverty and that demand some sort of alternative society and development (but is not necessarily anti-establishment). As processes, they are hard to nail down in spatial and temporal terms, yet they are definitely held within the bounds of time. Our definition shall include formal grassroots organisations as well as other forms of less structured collective action (many times cyclical in nature), such as NGO's and networks, that are used as a means of directing stakeholders that are both organised and less so into the process of social mobilisation.

Generally speaking, political pressure is the only way to guarantee a transfer of resources, and this takes social organisation. In the particular case of democracies, where the political machinery of the parties has been weakened, social movements are one of the few legitimate sources of power that are open to the poorest sectors of the population. The theory is that mobilisation is one of the chief ways through which people found within those sectors can have some sort of guarantee that the state will respond favourably to their cause, and so, social movements are important stakeholders in the process of successfully reducing poverty. Nevertheless, this argument lacks empirical data, and filling that information gap is just what this study is designed to do.

At times, we hear that social movements are classified as "politiqueros" (political operatives) who are only after their own interests and whose claims affect no one else but themselves. Nevertheless, there are studies out there showing that social movements have the potential to reduce poverty. As an elemental part or consequence of the fight against injustice, it may be that social movements are

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<sup>1</sup> We would like to thank the UK Economic and Social Research Council, which provided us funding, as well as the feedback and suggestions received from participants in the CEPES workshop of August 25<sup>th</sup> and those from the CONVEAGRO meeting on September 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2008.

also engaged in the struggle against poverty, albeit not explicitly so. As a result, any social movement achievement could affect that fight. This study began from that premise: we not only wish to understand social movements, but also their relationship to poverty.

In work done in academic circles, social movements are seen as ways in which the concerns of the poor and marginalized are made public as well as means towards local empowerment and civic activism. Yet, these studies have paid very little attention to two points, namely:

- a) what social movements mean to the poor
- b) how movements make decisions on their strategies, what their preferred strategies are, and the effectiveness of those strategies in a determined political and economic context

These strategies are constantly being reviewed, watered down, and put to the test. However, little is known about the dynamics, how they change according to the nature of the political context in which the movements are operating, or the success of a specific strategy in relation to that context. Consequently, our study will encompass these points that are not normally examined.

We will also analyze social movement strategies that involve express attempts by the poor to involve themselves in the political system as the latter seeks to meet development needs and to reduce poverty. We are working under the hypothesis that movements have the capacity to influence the state (and other spheres) in accordance with the strategies they use to approach the political arena. In its own right, the political context has a significant impact on the type of strategies movements adopt as well as the extent of their success.

There were three broad questions we looked to answer through this study:

1. How important are social movements in reducing poverty?
2. What aspects of the movement and of the political context affect how a social movement makes decisions on its strategies?
3. What aspects of the movement and of the political context determine the effects of the strategies?

This two stage study, launched in October 2007, will last two years, each year corresponding to one stage. The first year was devoted to mapping existing social movements in Peru, based upon interviews of key informants (social movement leaders and members, experts on the subject, academics, observers) and a literature review. During the second year, we will focus on two or three social movements, thoroughly and meticulously analysing them. At the end of each stage, we will organize workshops and invite social movement leaders, activists, academics, and other researchers to discuss the main results gotten on the basis of our research. A similar process is to take place in South Africa. Once the last workshop is completed in both countries, we will discuss the end result in a

workshop in Manchester and through a series of presentations and conferences. Lastly, on the basis of the project's results, we plan to write three articles and one final report, the latter to be published as a book.

As stated above, the first year's effort was directed toward preparing a map of all the social movements in Peru, and the following discussion is the executive summary of the first stage report.

## **II. SOCIAL MOVEMENT MAPPING**

Since our purpose was to sketch out a preliminary map of existing social movements in Peru, we produced a list of discussion topics that we covered in fifty-six interviews scheduled and carried out between December 2007 and June 2008 with different social movement leaders, observers, collaborators, experts and other related to them.

Based upon our definition of a social movement, i.e. a process of politicized collective action process whose purpose is to fight against conditions that replicate inequality and injustice and whose view of society and development is an alternative one, we identified ten social movements present in Peru today; though some are more active than others, we included each one in the map. The ten are:

1. Agrarian
2. Cocalero (coca growers)
3. Environmental
4. Extractive industry
5. Feminist
6. Human rights based
7. Indigenous
8. Union based
9. Sub-national
10. Popular women

We are well aware the list may be controversial and can be improved, yet, fact of the matter is we initially had fourteen social movements, but after many months of discussion, we arrived at these ten, which in our opinion are the ones that exist in Peru. Through the process, we eliminated some and added others, realizing that not everyone will agree with the end product. That is why we devote the next few paragraphs to explaining why we chose these ten.

First, it is important to differentiate between a social movement and a campaign. The latter is designed for the short term and with a clear objective that, once achieved (or not because the context makes it impossible to reach), it undeniably ends. An example of this is the campaign "TLC Asi No" (FTA: Not This Way). We held many discussions on whether or not this was indeed a social movement, but due to its short life span and finality of its objective (that dropped off the social agenda once the FTA had been signed and ratified), we decided against it being a

campaign. Yet, we do consider the possibility that it could, at some point in the future, become a broader, more sustained social movement focused upon globalisation. In the same way, we debated possibly including the issue of water as a social movement but ultimately decided against this since its stakeholders only act from time to time on such aspects as urban water privatisation or the threat of rivers being contaminated on account of mining near headwaters.

We likewise discarded the urban movement, which, in Peru during the 1960's and 1970's, was one of the most important. Groups of people would squat together on parcels and then demand the government give them their titles and provide them basic services, an action known in Peru as an invasion. However, this is a case of a social movement that lasted a short while and, once its demands were fulfilled by the government, disappeared. While squatting has diminished over the years, it has still not disappeared entirely, but the state has institutionalised mechanisms it uses to approach these people and offer them titles and services. Additionally, power and telephone companies want to provide their services to these areas since it is a matter of revenue for them; they gain more clients. Nonetheless, water is a different case altogether due to the geographic difficulty in reaching some of these squatter settlements (located on steep hillsides that make installing pipes difficult), but the people still have contact with the water company (SEDAPAL). As a consequence, the need for a social movement has lessened, until today it is no more, and we do not see the urban movement.

There was also the discussion of the "ronderos", a significant group in our opinion, but not one we would classify a social movement.<sup>2</sup> According to our definition of a social movement, social or popular organisations may participate in them, but that does not necessarily mean those organisations are themselves social movements. This is the case of the "ronderos": it is just a social organisation that can become part of any number of social movements (human rights, agrarian, etc.). As a matter of fact, there are no such things as clear cut, rondero objectives. One other potential movement excluded from our list was the consumer movement due to the diversity of its objectives and lack of cohesiveness within its constituents. As it stands now, it still could become part of the list at some point in the future.

Let us move on to the ten movements that we consider truly exist in Peru based upon our definition. For each one we deem a current Peruvian social movement, it is necessary to describe it, provide the reasons why we placed it on the list, and point out its driving force and contact points with and overlaps into other movements.

1. *Agrarian movement*: there is a question as to whether or not an agrarian movement exists. We might have easily chosen the "movimiento campesino" (farmer movement). After several months of work and interviews, we came to the conclusion that the traditional "movimiento

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<sup>2</sup> Ronderos are self-defence committees that began in the 1970's as a way for rural communities to protect themselves from the threat of terrorists.

campesino”, which has been in the popular lexicon for decades, does not really exist. With the passage of time, a movement’s goals and discourse evolve – a fact we will describe throughout the map. So, current members of this movement call themselves “producers”, and the identification as an agrarian “producer” is vital. No longer is agrarian reform the objective. Likewise, while farmer organisations seek changes that have to do with land ownership and natural resources, they are now doing so as part of other movements (the extractive industry movement). Their agendas today are filled with issue surrounding markets, prices, and production. Therefore, the evolution of their agenda and the new way in which they identify themselves obliges us to talk about an agrarian movement.

2. *Cocalero movement*: one particular characteristic of this movement is its limited connection with other ones. It neither constructs shared agendas nor claims things that are not related to the cultivation of coca. Many coca growers also raise other crops, which is a reason for stating that this movement should belong inside the agrarian. But, in reality, coca growers have always maintained their autonomy and independence, have always had their own organisations to represent them, and have kept themselves apart from all other groups, which makes them a separate movement, completely different from any other.
3. *Environmental movement*: this is a rather peculiar case. Is it possible to talk about just one movement? In reality, what we found were different groups though with a common element: defending the environment, albeit for different reasons. Yet, they do not work together or have the same identity or agenda. There are the “marrones” (browns), their name within the movement, who are concerned with environmental and human consequences of industrialization, mining, and urbanization. Then, there are the “verdes” (greens), also known as conservationists, who work for conserving nature and biodiversity yet do not give any special consideration for the people living in it. Lately, they have been employing a more social approach, yet it is a small advance. We also found social environmentalists with an agenda centred on the relationship the environment, rights, and social justice have. And last on the list are the “sentimentales” and also the “azules” (blues). In general, we found a great variety of groups, which could be said to be small movements in and of themselves, but our opinion is that it is a relatively disjointed social movement in the process of becoming institutionalised since, when all things are said and done, each group rallies around an agenda concerned with the environment (which does overlap into other movements, such as the indigenous, human rights, etc.).
4. *Extractive industry movement*: first off, it is important we set the record straight. Although mining, hydrocarbons, logging, and fishing are extractive industries and around each organized groups have mobilized themselves, we are limiting our map to just mining. We recognise this movement cannot be reduced solely to mining, especially since Peru is a country dependent

on all the extractive industries. The mining and hydrocarbon extraction boom has brought about the situation of different firms setting up exploration and extraction operations in rural zones, which has resulted in these areas becoming contaminated, particularly the natural resources needed by nearby populations. As a consequence, a group dedicated to exclusively defending the people from the actions of extractive industry rose up. This social movement is related to three others: environmental, agrarian, and indigenous, but it cannot be equated to any of these. For the first case, the two movements can flow together to act jointly since both are defending the environment from assaults carried out by the extractive sector, yet the movement in question does not limit itself to making environmental claims. For the second case, while they have many contacts and any number of people can participate in both movements, they differentiate themselves through their agendas and claims, with the extractive industry movement focused necessarily on the negative impacts caused by the sector. And, for the third case, two popular organisations, CONACAMI (National Coordinator of Communities Affected by Mining) and AIDSESEP (Interethnic Association for the Development of the Peruvian Amazon), which nationally mobilise the population around the issue of extraction, also identify themselves as indigenous organisations, promote the concerns of native people, and belong to the indigenous movement.

5. *Feminist movement*: we held long discussions about placing this movement on our list. Feminists have a long history of being a movement in Peru, reaching high visibility and achieving important milestones. Nevertheless, times have changed, and even some of the founders of the feminist movement believe their movement has fizzled out and outright vanished. We do not share their opinion, preferring to see it as dormant yet still prevalent in some circles and groups and possessing certain presence on important dates found on the feminist calendar.
6. *Human rights movement*: it is possibly the most institutionalised movement in the country and has been evolving and gaining strength for four decades now. The human rights agenda is such that it allows members to link up with other social movements and stakeholders that the others have no contact with, such as journalists. It is one of the few that actually has a national coordinating body and a set of principles each member organisation has formally adopted.
7. *Indigenous movement*: this has been a topic for a very long time. Moreover, AIDSESEP, one of the main indigenous organisations, has been on the scene for close to thirty years. However, this issue was, for a long time, limited to the Peruvian Amazon, and only in the recent decade, during Alejandro Toledo's administration, did it reach national level proportions. That is why we deem it possible now to talk about it in terms of being a national indigenous movement, although three important elements had to come together to move this issue out of the Amazon and into the national

sphere: 1) the government concerning itself more with the reality facing indigenous people, 2) the boom of hydrocarbon extraction in the jungle, and 3) the adoption of the indigenous “discourse” of important organisations like CONACAMI.<sup>3</sup>

8. *Union movement*: it is the oldest and one of the most traditional movements in Peru and, more likely than not, the father of many others. It has gone through many changes and crises, perhaps the worst being the 1990’s during which time, as its leaders recount, all its efforts were put forth to hanging on for dear life. It is currently undergoing a recovery stage with new unions cropping up, with the struggle against outsourcing jobs, and with the strengthening of its international alliances. To understand how Peruvian social movements have changed throughout history, one needs to understand how this movement has evolved.
9. *Sub-national movement*: this is a case in which we cannot talk about just one movement but several, the reason being that we found in each sub-national region a social movement with an agenda and claims that correspond to that particular area of the country. Between these different sub-national regions, there is no complete agreement, except for the target of their claims, which is always the national government, although there are cases where they do coordinate to start forceful measures. There was one point in time, mainly around the end of the 1990’s when the country was struggling against the dictatorial rule of the president Alberto Fujimori, when we could say this was a single social movement that fought for a common goal (in fact, there were two, and both were achieved: overthrow Fujimori and decentralise the country) but, once that was attained that solidarity slipped away and we moved into a situation of having several sub-national movements.<sup>4</sup> During our research, we debated labelling it the decentralisation movement, but discarded that and opted for sub-national movements. The problem with calling it the decentralisation movement is the assumption that there would need to be different bodies working together with a shared agenda, using more or less the same discourse, and having national organisations. We do not find that in the Peruvian reality today, although there are organisations striving for that (Propuesta Ciudadana and maybe REMURPE – the Network of Rural Local Governments). As it stands now, each sub-national movement acts independently of the others, which is why we consider there are several movements that have their own objectives, strategies, and components.
10. *Popular women’s movement*: this movement is focused on bringing basic services to sectors of the population that are poor and mainly living in urban

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<sup>3</sup> Even though Garcia’s first administration saw the creation of the Indigenous Institute, it was during Toledo’s that the CONAPA (National Commission of Andean, Amazonian and Afro- Peruvian Peoples) came into existence, which later turned in INDEPA (National Institute for the Development of Andean, Amazonian, and Afro-Peruvian Peoples). The government is now strongly interested in indigenous organisations.

<sup>4</sup> This could lead to an interesting comparison with the Media Luna movement in Bolivia.

areas. Several different popular women's organisations have, over the years, taken it upon themselves to supply food, mainly, but they have also ventured into supplying other basic services for the most underprivileged. They organized themselves into programs: Comedores Populares (soup kitchens), Comités del Vaso de Leche (free school breakfast programs), and Clubes de Madres (mother's clubs), but as the years passed, the independence of these three gave way to becoming a social movement whose characteristics differentiated it from its forerunners: organized and led by women, dedicated to bringing basic services in conjunction with the government, and located in poor, basically urban sectors. Moreover, the movement is now a national one: the Comedores Populares has its own national body, and the Comites de Vaso de Leche are in the process of creating one, as well. Nevertheless, for some commentators, it is difficult to say this process is really a social movement since it does not promote an alternate vision of the Peruvian reality. However, we believe its goals do have an element of the alternative: a different way of organising social protection and welfare services vis-à-vis survival strategies used by the poor.

What comes next is the preliminary analysis of Peru's social movements based primarily upon interviews, the information of which we placed into a five category MS Access database:

- a) social constitution
- b) history and evolution
- c) domains
- d) alliances and other relationships
- e) relation to poverty

The following sections of the executive summary feature data on each social movement in order to highlight their individual characteristics and a synopsis at the end, providing elements held in common. This paper will not present detailed characteristics of each movement but is limited to providing a general overview.

## **1. Social Constitution**

In this section, we will, for each social movement, discuss members, components, supposed activity benefits, and decision making process for direction, priorities, and strategies.

While we have, in principle, identified ten movements, most of them still in their infant stages, the boundaries between them are not always precise, and, in some cases, certain people and organisations do belong to more than one. Consequently, there are some organisations involved in the agrarian, indigenous, and extractive industry movements. Moreover, components and concerns associated with the environmental movement also overlap into the extractive

industry movement. Likewise, the feminist and popular women’s movements have much in common.

Notwithstanding, there is the question as to if, at some level, all these movements do in fact belong to one nationwide movement that is just beginning to bud. An indicator of that hypothesis could be the Cumbre Social de los Pueblos (Popular Social Summit) that took place in Lima, in May 2008, yet it should be noted that not all movements took part in this event and, those that did, not all gave it the same amount of weight. In any case, what we have might be an indication of a movement of movements which is placing its hopes on and pushing for an alternative Peru, possesses a different country vision, and is not just seeking different arrangements for one section of the country.

It seems that all movements have three chief components:

1. Popular organisations that represent the beneficiaries or affected people/ victims, who are the reason why the movement exists
2. Unifying and aid organisations, like international and religious organisations and national, sub-national, and local NGO’s
3. Personal involvement on the part of people who can provide technical assistance, who are consultants or activists or sympathizers

Nevertheless, the people we interviewed have differences of opinion on whether these three components are part of a movement or rather allies. Almost all interviewees agree that beneficiaries, affected people, and victims and their organisations belong to a movement. But, for the other two components, the criteria on whether or not they belong differ. Generally speaking, it seems the more “altruistic” movements that work to defend the rights of “others” or of general interest (human rights, environmental, sub-national, and feminist movements) are more open to include completely in their movements aid organisations and activists and sympathizers. On the other hand, “unionized” movements that primarily defend but not exclusively the rights and interests of their own members (agrarian, cocalero, extractive industry, indigenous, union, or popular women’s movements) may not be too open to bring into their ranks those we mentioned above. The following chart illustrates this point:

<b>Social Movement</b>	<b>Popular Organisations</b>	<b>NGO’s</b>	<b>Sympathizers</b>	<b>“unionised” / “altruistic”</b>
Agrarian	In	In	In	unionised
Cocalero	In	Out	Out	unionised
Environmental	Out	In	In	altruistic
Extractive Industry	In	Out	Out	unionised
Feminist	Out	In	In	altruistic
Human rights	In	In	In	altruistic
Indigenous	In	Out	Out	unionised

Union	In	Out	Out	unionised
Sub-national	In	In	In	unionised
Popular Women	In	Out	Out	unionised

Source: research team's own creation based upon its interpretation.

Overall, the degree of consolidation of the movements appears to be very incipient; they lack national level coordinating mechanisms and agreed upon agendas and are very fragmented. There are only two movements with national coordinating entities: the agrarian, with CONVEAGRO (National Convention of Peruvian Agriculture), and human rights, with CNDDHH (National Human Rights Coordinating Committee). It is possible to include the extractive industry movement with the above two, with its CONACAMI, but the difference is that this body does not include NGO's and actually has a tenuous relationship with them, while the CONVEAGRO and CNDDHH are more inclusive. There are also several movements that have on board national organisations and informal coordinating mechanisms, which, could be signs that they are on the road to consolidation (union, indigenous, extractive industry, and popular women's movements). Nevertheless, there are others that are still active but not quite as advanced in their national consolidation (environmental, cocalero, feminist, and sub-national movements).

## **2. History and evolution**

Social movements we identified present in Peru are not equal in strength. Some are weak or dormant, like the feminist movement, while others, like the agrarian or extractive industry, are quite active. There are rather old ones – the union movement is the oldest in Peru – and others that are relatively new – environmental or indigenous. Each movement's history and evolution is unique, but certain aspects do coincide that should be pointed out. First, no movement has evolved in isolation. Some were actually the roots of others, for instance, the union and human rights movements. Second, the 1970's was a decade in which movements had much contact with the left, and many leaders came from the ranks of those parties, such as the feminist movement that grew strong during the 1980's. All of them have some sort of link to left wing parties. Third, the 1980's turned into a crisis for many of them, and the civil war that raged inside the country weakened different movements. Fourth, this situation was furthered aggravated during the Alberto Fujimori administrations of the 1990's when they all experienced a crisis. His tenure as president turned out to be a real challenge for survival for the social movements with his neo-liberal tendencies and clientelism and populist strategies, whose purpose was to stamp out all collective social action. For some, such as the feminist movement, the decade constituted a tailspin, one they have still not come out of. Likewise, the union movement has just recently begun a process of retooling. We feel it necessary to stress the importance of the last decade since it contributes to our understanding of the current situation of the social movements in Peru, which are weak, not institutionalised, have been

struggling for their goals for years, and yet, from their perspective, they are solid. Rather, we are looking at a time when social movements are rebuilding and reconfiguring themselves after having lasted through the past decade.

### **3. Domains**

This section is about current goals of the social movements, differences between those and the original goals at the moment of inception, strategies used to reach them, what they achieved, and the ideological or pragmatic nature of the movement.

Defending human rights and using a human rights theoretical framework are common to all movements, having become a linchpin in all their arguments. It is a central element and perhaps the most important change in social movements as a whole. Lately, we have seen more weight given to the goal of defending the environment and natural resources as the sustainable base for people's livelihoods as well as defending indigenous culture and identity. Each movement seeks to strengthen itself internally and its member organisations. Curiously, interviewees rarely spoke about reducing poverty or generating jobs as one of their movement's goals. Perhaps these might have been present if the interviews had been done at an earlier period in the movements' history.

There are no anti-establishment movements per se, although several want to reform the government, even rewrite the Constitution, and move away from the neo-liberal economic model that has been operating of late. On the contrary, there has been a decline in the rhetoric of class and of revolution and the influence of the left (while it is true the role of the left has diminished, movements still tend to lean to that side of the political spectrum). The most radical discourse of today is heard from the nascent indigenous and extractive industry movements. What is more, the trend is for the movements, generally speaking, to begin demanding basic changes to the economic model (and the economic policies associated with it), the Constitution, and the government. Nevertheless, every person interviewed described their movement as being pragmatic rather than ideological and their members as less ideologised.

Strategies of almost every movement combine marches and pressure from "the street" with political advocacy, lobbying, and negotiations. As is shown in the following chart, some movements, like the cocalero, extractive industry, indigenous, and sub-national, prefer more confrontational strategies, while others (agrarian, environmental, feminist, and human rights) would rather use more persuasive means. Still, there are others (union and popular women) that use a mixture of the two. During the 1970's, Payne (1965) characterized Peru's political system as "democracy by violence" because he found through the course of his investigation on the union movement that these organizations had to use direct action and threats of violence to move the state to intervene in labour conflicts and to encourage the parties to sit at the negotiation table where they could work together to come to acceptable solutions. Similarly, Caballero and Cabrera (2008)

highlighted the growing number of environmental conflicts in which affected parties would take direct action as a means of building up strength so social organisations and their representatives could begin negotiating with the government and/ or the corporations on firmer ground.

<b>Social Movement</b>	<b>Most used strategies</b>	<b>Confrontational</b>	<b>Persuasive</b>
Agrarian	Proposals, negotiations, advocacy before the Executive and Legislative, work stoppages		X
Cocalero	Marches of sacrifice, work stoppages, negotiations, advocacy	X	
Environmental	Advocacy, the media		X
Extractive Industry	Marches, work stoppages, advocacy		X
Feminist	Advocacy, the media, marches	X	
Human rights	Marches, the media, advocacy		X
Indigenous	Marches, work stoppages, advocacy, the media, negotiations	X	
Union	Marches, strikes, work stoppages, negotiations, the media	X	X
Sub-national	Work stoppages, building takeovers, marches, negotiations	X	
Popular Women	Marches, negotiations, advocacy, proposals	X	X

Source: research team's own creation based upon its interpretation.

The fall of the Fujimori administration brought with it greater openness to democracy and, in turn, more importance given to national public opinion and the relationship with the media. Even though access to the media has been difficult and disproportionate, almost every movement is increasing its use of the Internet to inform and connect their members and to get their message out to specialised and influential audiences. All of them demand more political participation in decisions that affect their members. To that, Congress seems to be more open and accessible but not that effective and the Executive closed and nearly impenetrable. It appears we have a contradiction between what social movements are demanding (a more participatory democracy) and the habits of democratically elected representatives. Lastly, as the world is becoming increasingly globalised, it should come as no surprise to find the majority of movements seeking international allies and agencies with the hope that these will take up and advocate their cause in the North so that this "external" advocacy will produce some type of effect in Peru. This is what Keck and Sikkink (1997) call the boomerang effect.

#### **4. Coalitions and relations**

Social movements do not work in isolation or, at least, they should not have to. Relationships and contacts are always important for reaching their goals. In the best case scenario, these relationships turn into benefiting alliances for the movement. In others, the dialogue is more moderate. And then there are the extreme cases of opposition. We will analyse, in this section, social movement relations with state entities, social organisations, and even other social movements.

##### **Social movements, the nation, and the government**

Flipping through Peruvian social movements' files of relations and alliances gives us, more or less, the same view: they all know that current decision making power is in the hands of the Executive Branch. The Congress of Peru is a much weaker branch of the government and has no power to act, so it is not able to solve their problems. In general, movements maintain good relations with the Congress, but this does not hold much weight when it comes time to prepare an agenda, precisely because it does not wield the power. Therefore, it does not really matter that movements have more possibilities to meet and dialogue with members of the Legislative Branch. It is the view of some leaders that because Congress has grown so weak, their movements have had to replace it in the system of checks and balances with respect to the Executive.

So, present power in Peru is centred in the Executive, but one that has shut itself off from dialoguing, does not accept criticism, and has even created laws that make protesting a crime. We are now in the midst of an administration that does not want opposition, cannot accept anyone who stands against its ideas and policies, and consigns any person who speaks out against it to the status of the "dog in the manger", an allusion to Aesop's fable. This administration has many times been described as arrogant and able to act with impunity, that imposes its policies without consulting with the people, without bearing in mind their needs and opinions. The result for social movements is they are in an uncomfortable position. They are called "dissenters" by the government – people who do not want what is best for the country; rather, they would like to see Peru remain a backwards nation. As a consequence, social movements have been forced to pursue objectives in a situation with practically zero chances of dialoguing with the government and, in addition, being demonised by it.

With this as the background, relating to government bodies happens very rarely. And if there is any semblance of a relationship, this is due mostly to a specific government official rather than the policy of the body in question. So, if this official were relieved of his duty, it is most likely that the movement would lose contact with that body. Yet, while we are in this context of limited dialogue, there are still some entities we must point out that are swimming against this current. The Ombudswoman Office is one, and it performs an incredibly important role. All movements maintain relationship with it and in many cases have even forged

alliances. This office does not live by the policy of non-dialogue, zero tolerance to criticism, and the demonisation of social organisations, which is the nature of this present administration. There is also the Presidency of the Council of Ministers (PCM) but in particular Prime Minister Jorge Del Castillo, who, according to different interviewees, has been in contact with some of the main social leaders in Peru. That is why, on the whole, social movements do not complain about or criticise the PCM. It should be noted that throughout history, the role of the PCM has been different. During some administrations, it was more open to dialogue and less so in others. Right now, it is in the business of “putting out fires” rather than preventing them.

It is also important to know that the present government has closed the doors on bodies whose formal duties were dialogue and negotiation, resulting in zero relations with them. That is why social movements have come to the point where they must implement non-formal ways to get their message across (especially the use of lobbying and marches). This is information seen in the chart above that outlines the strategies used.

There is the other side of the coin, and that is the sub-national and local governments. While there is practically no relationship with the national government, social movements definitely have a more open and meaningful one with these two governmental levels. What is more, in many cases, not only is there dialogue between them and the movements, but some of the latter’s member organizations also have established alliances with them, thereby creating opportunities to work together and to coordinate. There are even some sub-national governments that bring plans and proposals, endorsed by social movements, to the national government in order to negotiate with it. This is a relationship diametrically opposed to that which social movements have with the national government; while Lima shuts the doors of its dialoguing offices and barricades itself away, the sub-nationals are not only talking, but also arranging alliances with the movements. In this critical situation produced by the national government, the existence of the sub-national level is very important since it plays the part of an escape valve and is the only option for having contact with any entity in power. Nonetheless, it is not always the marriage made in heaven. In many cases, social movements and sub-national government have not established solid links, which is what occurred in the Amazon for several months during 2008.

### **Social movements, NGO’s, and social organisations**

As a result of the limited relations with the state, movements have strengthened those they have with social organisations, with the most important alliances being with NGO’s. These work with, support, and represent a source of funding and advocacy for them. Many movements acknowledge their dependency upon the relationship they maintain with NGO’s, and it is for this exact reason that they do not wish to see the part NGO’s play to spill over into spheres that correspond to popular organizations, i.e. social representation. Relations with the NGO’s are very important, but they cannot replace social organizations. Besides, social

organizations and NGO's compete for cooperation funds. What we mean is that while it is certain NGO's are the main allies of social organizations, these two do not have the perfect association. There is friction and distrust between them.

On the other hand, what social movements have accomplished in arranging contacts abroad has been very significant. Right now, they are allied with international NGO's and worldwide social movements, which is not only creating possibilities for them to be strengthened and to receive aid, but also to learn about what is happening in foreign contexts and the operational dynamics of other social movements. This last state of affairs is a particularly enriching experience since it contributes to broadening a movement's agenda and even to transforming it, considering that some desire to follow what neighbouring movements are doing (which is a two-way street since stakeholders in other countries also receive from their Peruvian counterparts). Perhaps the most prominent case is the indigenous movements being led by Ecuadorian and Bolivian groups.

Lastly, we need to bring up the first contacts made among current social movements. Traditionally, social movements in Peru have not acted jointly, and perhaps the only time that really happened was during the struggle against the Fujimori administration. Yet, for a long period of time, each movement has been independent and operated with no relation to the others. Now, it seems that they are beginning the process of joining forces, something that may have begun with the Cumbre Social de los Pueblos, an event that could be viewed as more a means than an end – a means of strengthening relationships that will come to fruition in the future. It was a forum through which many associations were solidified and still others established that remain today. Maybe the most significant ones are between the agrarian, indigenous, and extractive industry movements, creating a huge movement associated with the rural context. Then, there is the one between these three and the union movement. Together with them, there are connections between the indigenous and environmental movements and the human rights and union.

### **Social Movements and the Media**

There is another relationship necessary for understanding the reality of social movements in today's Peru, but we need not examine them to be able to appreciate it since we are talking about an outside player: the media. Specifically, there are certain questions to be answered, like how does the media portray social movements, what do they say about them, which ones are considered, what issues are brought up, what perspectives are taken, what debates are generated, etc. The conclusions of this section are based upon our monitoring of the news since beginning the research, November 2007. We read press releases and Peruvian newsletters as part of our analysis to answer this question: how are social movements seen?

What we discovered was that, at the moment, different social organizations, which make up the movements, are not being covered very broadly by the media. In the

few cases in which the media shows an interest in the organizations, they are spun as “dissenters” or wanting to keep Peru in the dark ages, an attitude promoted by the President through a series of editorials titled “The Dog in the Manger”. That is one reason why social organizations must make their message heard through other media, mainly associated with NGO’s, or even their own awareness raising projects. Lastly, there is the extremely important element to keep in mind and that being the difference within social movements according to the media coverage. Some appear in the news because they can mobilise huge numbers of people (in marches, work stoppages), and then there are others, more institutionalized, like the human rights movements and to a lesser extent the environmental, that have the available resources to influence media agendas.

## **5. Poverty**

Featured in this section is data on how social movements view poverty and its causes as well as the relationship between their goals and proposals (which hardly ever explicitly bring up the matter or its eradication) and poverty. Likewise, we will touch upon whether or not social movements and their leaders concern themselves with poverty and if their activities are designed to change that situation.

### **Definition of poverty**

Most people involved in social movements do declare that poverty is not a discussion topic in their movement. Many call into question the commonly held concept of poverty, and a healthy number say their members are not in the ranks of the poor.

It would seem that to be identified as “poor” more often than not is associated with discrimination and stigma. One important issue among members of the indigenous, agrarian, and extractive industry movements is poverty being associated with isolation and exclusion, with the separation from community and social relations, and with lack of access to essential natural resources that can form the foundation for livelihoods. In Quechua, the concept of poverty is summed up in the word “huaqcha”, which means “poor” or “orphan” and is used in reference to people who are poor because they are alone and have neither family nor community or social relationships which would give them access to resources (land, natural resources, labour) that would enable them to make a living.

To conclude, it is evident that social movement leaders and activists understand poverty in a way that moves beyond simple income or material considerations. It is also evident that social movements differ in their conceptualization of poverty depending on where their members live: in the city or in the country. For the former, poverty is more often seen in terms of lack of employment and state services, while the latter stresses the “huaqcha” view of poverty (having social relations and access to natural resources for use in livelihoods).

## **The causes of poverty**

Several social movement members, in particular from the sub-national movement, attribute poverty to Peru's current economic model, while others to government policies, which allow for unfair competition. In the latter perspective, the lack of agricultural profitability is what generates poverty, and it is the state policies which are generating this limited profitability. There are still other people who declare government policies discriminate against the most vulnerable sectors of the population and exclude them from services and opportunities that exist as ways of climbing out of poverty. Then there are those who say poverty is a result of human rights violations (particularly the ones associated with economics, society, and culture) by the government or large corporations.

To sum up, social movement members supplied us with a series of causes, which are not limited to economics or production but cross into state and corporate structures, policies, and practices, in particular the extractive sector, and include the limitations of the poor themselves.

## **Proposed solutions**

The solution proposed by some was to change the neo-liberal economic policies that have been in place. Others put forward the need for a constitutional convention where members will create a new, multicultural state with participatory democracy. There were proposals for reforming public policies within the existing structure in order to reduce the levels of exclusion and discrimination as well as to guarantee rights be respected, particularly the right to health, education, and a decent life. And still others claim the need for more measures so the poor and excluded can have more opportunities. Those in the environmental, indigenous, and extractive industry movements cited environmental degradation, wasted natural resources, and extractive industry plundering as the main causes of poverty, placing particular emphasis on rural areas and indigenous communities. Their key strategies in the fight against poverty were defence of the land, legal certainty for territory, as well as conservation of the environment.

As can be seen, while social movements neither speak openly of prioritizing the eradication of poverty nor propose changes for explicitly fighting against it, when we directly asked them about the topic, we discovered that they do not consider their members as being "poor" (due to negative connotations associated with the word: lack of capacity and a passive nature). Rather, they prefer using the concept of them being "victims" of a system, set of policies, and outside forces that set up barriers to developing strengths and capacities that would contribute to ridding themselves of discrimination and exclusion. There are even some movements whose members out-and-out reject the "official" concept and definition of poverty and hold that they are not "poor" because they have their own cultural wealth and natural resources, which is enough for them to satisfy their material needs if they would be able to defend themselves from foreign economic trespassers and plunderers and their government allies. As a result, they see their struggle to

achieve “political” changes as an integral and essential part of any strategy in combating and eradicating poverty, which is a vision and rhetoric in direct opposition to the “official” world’s (represented by the World Bank, international cooperation, the government, and NGO’s) and its proposals for going about the “fight against poverty”.

#### **IV. CONCLUSIONS: DISCUSSION TOPICS**

Given the nature of this work’s objective, i.e. to create an initial map of active social movements within today’s Peru and not to give an answer to a thesis or research question, this section is not going feature study conclusions, rather a series of discussion topics that arose as a result of the map’s creations and questions we asked ourselves as a way of focusing on the next stage of the research.

One way of discussing social movements is to divide them into three groups:

1. Those that defend rights
2. Those that defend an identity
3. Those concerned with fighting for basic services

As we will point out later on, Peruvian social movements do overlap into each other’s domains, which is also an observable fact of this typology.

- a) Movements that defend rights, which can include the environmental, extractive industry, human rights, indigenous, union, and sub-national movements. They defend a variety of rights: agricultural, environmental, human, labour, and community and collective. Despite the differences in rights they fight for, what they hold in common is their speech with regards to their defence.
- b) Movements that defend an identity, which includes these movements: cocalero (coca growers, who consider the plant sacred), feminist (women), and indigenous (indigenous peoples). The latter is part of the other group.
- c) Movements associated with fighting for basic services and public policies as support to livelihood strategies, which include the popular women and agrarian movements. The former is characterized by fighting for basic services for the most underprivileged populations, with its original work being food distribution, but as the years passed, its targets have widened. The latter attempts to bring about public policies that support its members’ livelihood strategies.

We found another way of dividing social groups: into two groups.

- a) Those that tend to be more focused and exclusionary, whose members are more committed and/ or radical.
- b) Those that tend to be larger and more open and heterogeneous.

Each group has its own pluses and minuses. For instance, a movement focused on a specific problem, such as impacts on indigenous and farm communities caused by extracting natural resources, may concentrate its members' efforts and command a level of commitment and loyalty greater than a different movement, such as the environmental or human rights, which has formed broader alliances and whose membership may be greater and more diverse but with level of commitment and engagement that is lesser. The former can make up for what it lacks through its intensity, while the latter can compensate for its loss of member heterogeneity and diminished engagement level with its size and amplitude. So, the question remains are there contexts or conditions that suggest one type of movement will be more successful than another?

Also related to this discussion is the fact that some movements (agrarian, union, and extractive industry) seek to solve problems facing its members, while others (environmental and human rights) are more oriented to solving the problems facing other people or the society as a whole. Therefore, is it easier for "altruistic" movements to forge alliances and sway public opinion than for "unionized" ones that only look out for their members' interests? Are members of the first group less committed/ interested than those of the second? What are the implications of each group's actions?

As for the topic of goals, we distinguish between transformers (that want system wide change) and reformers (that want to change some aspects of a system they recognize). The former are more radical and include objectives like government reform and constitutional amendment. Movements in this group are the cocalero (when not dormant), extractive industry, and indigenous. The second group includes the agrarian, environmental, feminist, human rights, union, sub-national, and popular women's movements. There was a time when the union and sub-national movements were classified as transformers since their agendas have undergone varying degree of extremism. Currently, they are closer to being reformers than transformers.

The list we completed was the product of a process in which we discussed and discarded the different options on the basis of our definition of a social movement and the characteristics present in the different organizations that make up Peru's civil society. For example, there are campaigns in full swing that target racial and ethnic discrimination, children, people living with disabilities, a national referendum (the FONAVI case, having to do with the National Housing Fund), FTA with the United States, etc. But in our judgment, these do not meet the requirement of persistence in time, which is why we do not consider them to be social movements. Nevertheless, the possibility remains that what we have classified a "campaign" may become, in time, a social movement with a more permanent life. On the other hand, we included the feminist movement on our list, which some people declare "no longer exists", because, even though it is not as visible or as active right now as it once was, it still is around, thus demonstrating a certain degree of permanence throughout the decades. Likewise, we were concerned with the

situation that movements tend to be identified more on the left side of the political spectrum than to the right, and we were unable to identify, in Peru of today, a social movement with conservative leanings. In the end, we still retain some doubts as to whether we have included movements on the list that do not deserve to be there and have excluded others that do merit incorporation.

Along the same lines, we would like to point out the areas where there is no social movement:

- For claiming titles and basic services in the urban setting
- For sexual identity. Collectives there are but not many, and these are weak and lack linkage with each other.
- For minorities. It is in the same category as the above point. There are no movements for any of the minorities (sexual, racial, religious, people with disabilities)
- For children and young people
- For health

Another one of our concerns is the degree of overlap between the identified movements. We feel that there is a mobilisation process underway in populations living in rural areas for defending their rights to demand attention and services from the state, for reducing poverty, which weighs upon them heavier than in urban settings, and for having greater equality in society. There are many sides to this process, and it is expressed through different movements, which do somewhat overlap. This overlapping could be a sign of future integration. For example, CONACAMI is the focal point of the extractive industry movement, but it has lately taken up an active leadership role in the indigenous movement that, at the moment, is not restricted to Amazonian native communities. There are two farmer organizations, CCP (Farmer Confederation of Peru) and CNA (National Agrarian Federation), that belong to the agrarian movement due to their membership in CONVEAGRO, yet they have also recently been participating actively in the indigenous movement. A question worth asking, then, is: would the extractive industry and indigenous movements retain their independence if CONACAMI continues its leadership role in both? Might the environmental and extractive industry movements eventually merge into one or possibly the feminist and popular women's? And, does it make more sense, conceptually or practically, to handle these movements separately or to combine them?

Interviewees provided us different standards on whether some members and specific stakeholders belonged to a movement. In general, there was consensus that social organisations are full members of their respective movements but not with regards to the other stakeholders, like NGOs, church denominations, advisors, and activists. Some movements, like the agrarian and human rights, seem to have decided on accepting social organisations, like the popular movement, "Never Again!", small farmer's federations or unions (according to the case), NGOs, church's organizations, advisors, technical assistance consultants, and others as

members of their movements. In regards to other movements, members of social organisations, like unions, AIDSESP, CONCAMI, etc. identified the movements with their organisation (or organisations), yet deemed NGO's, advisors, technical assistance consultants, church denominations, sympathizers, etc. as allied, not full members. Such information gives us more conceptual and practical questions: are social movements just made up of social organisations or of a broader stakeholder set? What is implied for social movement management and control if membership is larger? smaller? What is the relationship between membership and capacity to forge alliances or influence public opinion? Who decides what stakeholders are part of the movement, and what is the decision making process? In analytical terms, how should we relate the concepts of social movement or poverty held by stakeholders with those held by analysts and academics?

Whether all are members or just some and others allies, there are questions we have to answer and differences to note on the role each one plays for every movement. The role of the different organizations making up a social movement is not always well defined, and, on more than one occasion, it brings about conflicts or barriers to coordination. For example, several popular organization leaders did acknowledge how important NGO's are, but they complained about the roles these were assuming. While it is true that the presence of NGO's is essential, they do not want them to be their representatives, a function that should be given solely to social organizations.

There are also cases in which some of the organizations making up a social movement are service providers. This is a situation more clearly seen in the popular women's movement, whose principle organizations (comedores populares, vaso de leche, etc.) devote their efforts to providing a service to the population. In most social movements, elements are organizations that strive to meet their goals, see their claims realized, and usually look for a benefit (whether their own or for the greater good), but this does not mean they always provide a service. Therefore, questions to be raised are: what happens when organizations that make up the social movements assume roles that involve providing services or subsidies? What are the consequences within the movement itself? How does one conceptualize this type of change?

Another issue up for analysis is the relationship between the movements and political parties. For many years, they were closely aligned, and bonds with the left were especially strong during the 1970's. Some of the social movements were birthed from the associations (like the popular women's). During that time period, movements were quite a bit more ideological than they are right now. Another important episode in this relationship was the end of the 1990's, when social movements and opposition political parties united in the struggle against Alberto Fujimori's dictatorial administration. One important figure who worked side by side with the movements and helped to strengthen them was the congressman, Gustavo Mohme. At the moment, there is not that close of a relationship between the two. To be more precise, many social movement members lobby different congressmen and women and other politicians, but they themselves are not

affiliated with any political party. It is likely that this erosion in the two group's relationship is a result of the weakening of the political parties. Presently, some social organizations (members of the agrarian, indigenous, and extractive industry movements) are participating in the Social Political Coordinating Body, a forum that also includes the Peruvian Nationalist Party (PNP). This latter organization has contacts with the cocalero movement; in fact, two cocalero leaders are PNP members: one is a congresswoman and the other a member of the Andean Parliament. Consequently, the questions to be answered are: what are the advantages to relating with a political party? Is it better for social movements to have close contact with the parties, as it was thirty years ago, or to be independent and to maintain specific alliances with them, no matter their ideology, as is the trend today?

Another topic of discussion is the relationship with the media. Preliminary questions are: what do some social movements do in order to have a relationship with the media that is more solid than others? Why is it that some cannot approach the media? Why are some usually criticised in the media? Why do others, in contrast, have access to the media? What power structures come into play here? When it comes to social movement media relations, we find cases (extractive industry and indigenous) in which the normal media response is criticism. Their member organizations are even described as not wanting the country to develop. And, they attract the greatest amount of media coverage during mass mobilisations, like marches or work stoppages. Then we have the flip side of the coin, with the human rights movement, which not only receives greater media coverage, but also counts many journalists and opinion leaders as important allies to the movement. So, what we arrive at are more questions for discussion: What is the difference between these two movements? Why are the actions of one, as it struggles for its objectives, viewed in a positive light and even supported, while the other is demonised and little weight given to it? What should a social movement look like so it can receive media coverage?

As for the relationship between social movements and poverty, we observe the difference between being poor and being a victim. Especially in the case of the human rights movement, interviewees pointed out to us that they are different categories with agendas that should not be crossed. In many cases, victims are also poor, and, while they must appeal to their condition of being a victim, this should not be seen as a means of changing their condition of being poor. Accordingly, we cannot expect that attacking poverty is the same as trying to meet the demands of the poor, or vice versa, that attempting to meet the needs of the poor will actually contribute to the fight against poverty. Those are two different agendas that do overlap (since the great majority of victims are also poor) but must be treated independently. So, we are left with these questions: what does one do with the dual identity of being a victim and being poor? How should we handle those cases? What should the government approach be? However, there is another side to this and, that is, when talking about "victims", we are not saying an idle person who must wait for the state to act on their behalf. Rather, they are extremely important stakeholders who are actively involved in the battles of their

social movements. In that sense, we must ask: is it a good idea to use the concept of “victim” or would it be smarter to describe them in another fashion? How should a “victim”, actively participating in a social movement, be understood? How do they contribute to the movement? What are the pros and cons to having victims as elements of a movement?

As of this point, we have spoken about movement case studies, and they are doubtless the focus of our interest. Nevertheless, as pointed out above, a social movement is a vague concept and, practically speaking, is seen in the popular organizations, NGO’s, networks, sympathizers, activists, etc. that comprise it. Along these lines, then, are a certain group of questions, namely: is it feasible to define a movement as a matter for analysis? When it comes down to it, will we have to approach a study on social movements through studying other, more institutionalized and concrete entities, like organizations, NGO’s, etc, and their interrelations? What should the unit of analysis be?

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