

ACISAM CASE STUDY, EL SALVADOR

Introduction

ACISAM, *Asociación de Capacitación e Investigación para la Salud Mental* (Association for Training and Research for Mental Health), is a Salvadoran NGO that was founded in 1986 to help the population address war-related trauma. ACISAM is one of the few NGOs actively involved in the promotion, prevention and attention to the mental health needs of the Salvadoran population, principally in the rural areas. The organization concentrates its work in the area of children and youth, community radio and television, violence prevention and conflict resolution. They also have a mental health clinic, named *Quentinemi*, and publish the magazine, "Advances in Mental Health".

Their work in the area of communications was initiated under the premise that there is an important link between mental health and communication. The production of community videos, not as instruments of propaganda, but as instruments for the promotion of mental health, documents the opinions and life experiences of the affected population in order to capture the collective experience of the community.

Currently the communications program has two main areas: One is the "Community Sound" project which consists of recording different community messages with participating community members, and then playing them back to the community through loudspeakers placed in different strategic places in the community. So in a sense, this substitutes a local radio station, but it's not aired through a frequency channel. The other is the "Community Television" project which consists of filming community issues on video tape, either through interviews or through dramatized scripts, and then showing them in a public meeting place for the whole community, to later analyze and discuss. To date they have approximately 120 groups formed in different communities including both community sound and community television groups. The groups are mostly made up of young people between the ages of 15 – 28.

The present case study is focused on the Community TV project. ACISAM initiates a community TV/video project in a new community based on the needs that have been identified through previous assessment. They start out by meeting with local authorities to explain their purpose and reach a formal agreement for cooperation. Then they hold a public meeting in which they'll invite the youth or the neediest groups identified to become a part of the program. The psychologists in ACISAM's team help by explaining how improving communication and expressing yourself can help mental health, which will in turn benefit the whole community.

According to ACISAM's communications team, none of the communities has been "easy" to start out in. Most communities don't want to participate in anything unless they're given a hand out, and ACISAM has nothing to offer them, except an experience in training and filming. At first, 2-3 people might be interested and give them the support they need to film the community. However, when the rest of the community gets a chance to see a finished video, they become motivated, and a group of people will sign up to become a community video team.

ACISAM has recognized the deep need for expression that people have, and this is a long-term process, with long-term vision. Their goal is to help communities change their values, from looking out for one's own interests to working on behalf of the community's best interest. Through their persistence, many communities demonstrate a total change; whereas before they were isolated, "abandoned" people, today they are people who have a voice, who can communicate.

SUSTAINABILITY FACTORS	<p>Notes from Interviews</p> <p>Directly Involved (ACISAM)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noé Valladares, Communications Coordinator • Iván Bonilla, Community Facilitator • Sergio Sibrian, Training/Community Facilitator <p>Users</p> <p>3 community video team members (all youths, med-low educational level) from La Cabaña community:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Miguel Ángel Gutiérrez • Miguel Rivas • Cristian Sánchez <p>Organisations Having an Overview</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carlos Solórzano, one of the administrators at the La Cabaña Sugar Mill
Objectives	<p>ACISAM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To contribute to people's acknowledgement of their human capacity in improving their social, economic, cultural and ecological environment. • They visualize this project as self-sustaining. <p>Users</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the members of the community get to know their own common problems and be able to solve them together. • To communicate the concerns of the people of the community • It's good that we get to know the problems in our community and be able to collaborate with solutions. <p>Solórzano</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To interrelate the community with the expression of ideas that the same community has. • Believes they are meeting these objectives.
Policy environment	<p>ACISAM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The "Superintendence for Energy and Telecommunications" is the national institution that controls the use of telecommunications technology. They provide authorizations for selling TV or radio "space". One of their policies is to sell space through bids, so large companies or wealthy people can offer huge sums to buy their TV or radio channel, and thus a small NGO, like ACISAM, can't compete. They had tried to bid for TV space to create an alternative TV channel and weren't successful. However, large media corporations aren't working on alternative communication, and ACISAM has been able to do this at a regional level. • The organization's policy is basically to insure that the technology serves the communities in a pluralistic and ethical way. <p>Solórzano</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not aware of any policies
Institutional arrangements	<p>ACISAM (Organogram attached at the end)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project is coordinated by Noe Valladares, who is responsible for communications, and the NGO is directed by Raúl Durán. <p>Users</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Noe Valladares is the coordinator • They trust the organisation <p>Solórzano</p> <p>With respect to communication/ coordination: Yes there is coordination with the local government, but he doesn't know if they coordinate with other NGOs.</p>

	<p><u>Organisation roles / responsibilities/ Constraints.</u></p> <p>ACISAM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsibilities are clear; the work team has remained together since the project was initiated. They've grown together with the project, and so they feel they have excellent communication and coordination. • The constraints are mostly financial. Video equipment is expensive, and they only have enough for 6 communities to work on their "Community Television" programs at a time. Also, they would like to move to the use of digital equipment (more on this below). Although they've written some proposals, they haven't had success in getting them funded, as communications is generally a low priority for international funders. <p>Role of Target Group</p> <p>ACISAM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To learn to use the equipment, create a plan for production, and carry out their production within the timeframe specified, in order that the equipment can be used by other groups <p>Users</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be trained, write a project for producing a video, film, edit, show the video, etc. They are also aware that they should work on getting their own equipment soon, for which they asked the sugar mill to help them with a donation. <p><u>Review / evaluation procedures</u></p> <p>ACISAM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review procedures include local monitoring by the community facilitators through written reports, direct supervision of video scripts, and supervising the organizational capacity of the community television teams
<p>Target Groups</p>	<p>ACISAM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Target groups are defined according to the project and the needs of the community. For example, when they entered the community of Chalatenango, a town that's know for it's problems of social confrontation (remains of the civil war) and with very little access to communications, the people weren't enthusiastic about their proposed project. When asked if they would like to participate in a community radio or TV program they would say they couldn't, they didn't know how to hold a microphone, or they weren't sure what their voice would sound like. It wasn't a felt need, and their level of self-esteem was very low. So the first thing ACISAM did was help them produce a video, they tried it out, they viewed the video together, and once they saw the possibilities, they "bought" into the project, and have since made their own video team. Thus, the groups end up with a sense of ownership, the project is "their own". <p>Users</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anyone who wants can participate in this project. The video presentations are made on the basketball court in the evening, and they're open to everyone. <p>Solórzano</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He thinks the project targets the right groups because they present the videos where everyone can see it. • There are no other video facilities in their community and he is unaware if there are any other similar initiatives. <p><u>Poverty and the project</u></p> <p>ACISAM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In general, though, ACISAM takes on the youths as a strategic community force to promote the video project. They might also work with especially needy groups, such as a video project they're doing with a group of prostitutes. • One of ACISAM'S main objectives was that the poor would have the opportunity

to access a new means of communication, since normally they have absolutely no access (in the sense of them producing communications, as even the most poor usually have a radio and some have televisions).

Solórzano

- He thinks it meets their needs because the video team works on the topics that the community experiences.

Roles and Responsibilities

ACISAM

- Their role is to be multiplying agents of what they've learned and that they become a resource for the development of their own community. Also their responsibility includes forming their own criteria for the format and production of the video shows.

Users

- The community video team members have the responsibility of choosing each topic that will be presented and the way in which they want it to be shown. The team is responsible for most of what happens in the community, choosing topics, taping scenes; when the video is fiction (dramatizing), they act it out themselves, and edit the videos.

How have they been involved in project design?

ACISAM

- Once the videos are produced, they show them to the rest of the community during the evenings with a big screen and projector or a large TV. This format is very accessible, and people love to watch themselves and their neighbors on screen. It helps boost their self-esteem, and is a means of self-reflection and self-assessment.

Users

- ACISAM has trained them on the use of the video equipment and has given scholarships to some of them to get full training (esp. for editing). This helps them use the equipment/technology to it's best advantage.

Group ICT Capacity

ACISAM

- With respect to learning the use of the video camera and editing equipment, they have found the groups to be able to manage the information surprisingly well. They have been able to train themselves rapidly and creatively; the participants find the means of sharing information and mutually helping each other. For example, if one of the community team members doesn't know how to read, someone will help him/her. Or they'll work in pairs, one will film, the other will be interviewed or act. Then, they'll switch. This guarantees the passing on of technology, and learning the benefits of sharing.

Format

Users

- Feel that the current format is the best. Everyone in the community has liked it.

Solórzano

- The format seems adequate to him

Organiser/ User communication

Users

- They communicate with ACISAM's facilitator who is responsible for that community. When they need the facilitator to come, they call from the nearest

	<p>public phone (not in their community).</p> <p><u>Mobilisation working style</u></p> <p>ACISAM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initially upon entering a community, the organization presents itself with the local government, they state their purpose and the objectives of the project, and then sign an agreement with them. Then, they produce and present a community “television show”, and invite people to participate with them. Later, when community video teams are formed, the teams will come into ACISAM’s office for training and to coordinate video productions. The main conflicts that ACISAM has had to confront have to do with local power struggles, mostly with people involved in political parties or people from different religious beliefs. These people may want to use communications for their own propaganda, to promote their point of view. ACISAM views this as a psycho-social risk, and their way of addressing it is to emphasize in the communities that this is not a means for confrontation, but rather a means of drawing closer once they can see others’ points of view. The community members need to make a commitment to use communications in this sense. <p><u>Gender Issues</u></p> <p>ACISAM</p> <p>They address gender issues, but also issues related to children, youth, and ecology, whatever the community groups decide to do.</p>
<p>ICT Technology</p>	<p>ACISAM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> They have 6 sets of video equipment (camera and microphone) for 6 community groups to use at a time. This includes Super VHS, VHS, (some Panasonic, some Sony) and one Sony Digital. Their post production unit is a Panasonic machine for linear editing. Their equipment has come from Europe, mostly through donations. (They are just starting out with digital, and would like to purchase a computer to do computer editing with the communities, since this would make it much easier. But they don’t have the funds to do this yet.) This technology is not standardized. In fact, ACISAM is one of the few organizations that is working with community level communications in El Salvador. <p><u>Most popular services/technology</u></p> <p>ACISAM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The most popular technology depends on each community. Some prefer the community radio programs, because it meets their need for local information and advertising. Others prefer the community television, in which they get to address the issues they are interested in. <p>Users</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Both “community sounds” and “community TV” programs are popular. ACISAM decides which is most convenient to the community depending on distance between homes, and local interests. <p><u>Where are ICTs obtained?</u></p> <p>Users</p> <p>The community team members are given video cameras and microphones to work with.</p> <p><u>Technical Support/ Repairs</u></p> <p>ACISAM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> They have technical support available when the video equipment needs repair. They have what they call a “first aid” person, who’s a technician they know can repair most common problems. When this isn’t enough, they’ll take the

	<p>equipment into specialized electronic repair places. Repairs might take long, depending on what the damage is.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Something interesting here is that they form part of a network in El Salvador called ARPAS (Association for Participatory Radio Programs in El Salvador). This network provides training workshops for radio and electronic technicians in rural areas. Thus young people can learn to repair in their own communities much of the equipment that is used. <p>Users</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The cameras sometimes break down. They can be troublesome. When that happens, they call the ACISAM facilitator and they then exchange the camera with another one so they can continue filming. ACISAM takes care of the repairs. <p><u>Common cause of failure</u></p> <p>ACISAM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The most common cause of failure is the end of useful life of the equipment. <p><u>User criteria/ Constraints</u></p> <p>ACISAM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They do have certain restrictions with the equipment. These are: 1) that the community team must have a work plan, 2) that their production time is organized, and 3) that they be responsible for the care of the equipment. They make sure to teach the community team what it means to hold a camera in your hands. They need to learn to control the equipment, and internalize the fact that it's not a toy, but rather an instrument for work. They have to make sure that the community teams have a plan so they can use the camera to its best advantage. Plus they don't have a lot of equipment. Once the teams get used to the system, they learn to prepare, write up their scripts beforehand, and optimize the time spent with the equipment. ACISAM monitors the production time for each project. <p>Solórzano</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He thinks the technology used by the project has been adequate since everyone can see the results and see themselves in the presentations. • The sugar mill has become interested in the use of video, and has commissioned the video team to make a video on the mill's sponsorship of the local football team.
<p>Financing</p>	<p>ACISAM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The project has been funded through donations from international funding agencies and through the sale of services (offering documentaries and other video services) to other NGOs <p>Users</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The team members believe the project is funded through donations, but they have no idea how much it costs. <p>Solórzano</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is no funding that he's aware of, and has no knowledge of what the current costs are. <p><u>Budget</u></p> <p>ACISAM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capital = 1,000,000 colones = aprox. \$US 115,000 • Installation = 300,000 colones = aprox. \$35,000 • Maintenance = 3% budget • Replacement parts = 5% budget <p>Their annual budget is around \$80,000. This is a sum of funding received from donors, local contribution, and sale of services. The income received from selling services is used for equipment maintenance.</p>

	<p><u>Cost Recovery</u></p> <p>ACISAM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost recovery is not a goal for them, although sustainability at the community level is. The way they are approaching this is to use their donor funds for training (a 6 month process) and once community teams are trained and producing their video programs, they strongly encourage community members to find a way of getting their own equipment. Interestingly, most communities manage to find a way of getting equipment, either from a local donation, or a gift from a relative in the States, etc. Thus, ACISAM considers that only a small part of the cost of the project is not self-sustaining. <p>Solórzano</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With respect to cost sharing, he believes there could be a mechanism for the community itself to support the project, since they're aware of the benefits they are receiving from it. <p><u>Are there clear cost sharing mechanisms in place?</u></p> <p>ACISAM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The community where beneficiary interviews were conducted (below) is run by a sugar mill called La Cabaña. The sugar mill owners have also taken an interest in the community and the video team, and will be donating video equipment for their use. • Also, the group of community video and radio teams (around 120 total) is forming an association called COPAK, with the goal of purchasing their own equipment, thus guaranteeing that the community video and radio process will continue. <p>Users</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The team members are aware that there is no initial contribution, and that ACISAM pays for them to receive full training. But once training funds are finished, the community needs to find ways of paying for post-production time - which is basically transportation and food costs to the capital city - and eventually purchasing their own equipment <p><u>How are recurrent costs covered e.g. maintenance, consumables?</u></p> <p>ACISAM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For recurring costs, a fund is designated within the organization's budget to cover this cost. <p><u>Training/Upgrading and replacing</u></p> <p>ACISAM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training is one of their priorities within their program budget. • Equipment upgrade and replacement is made whenever funds allow
<p>The project process</p>	<p>ACISAM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The topics are based on community themes. When entering a community initially they'll do an assessment (community diagnosis) of the community to identify themes, as well as the most vulnerable groups, those who are the most needy for the project. They involve a few of these people in the first community video, show it to the rest of the community, and then, once a group of people (usually groups of 10 - 15 youths from 15 – 28 yrs old) are enthusiastic and committed to the training process (which takes 6 months), they'll let them start taking on their own projects based on their own themes. The important thing to ACISAM is to help construct alternative means for communication at a local level, and this has both a technical and a conceptual side to it as well. <p>Users</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACISAM staff members came to the community and they themselves did the first “community television show”, and then they invited community members to participate and learn how to do one. Those who have liked doing it have remained on the team. Now they (the team) participate in filming, as sound technicians and video editors. They also write the stories for the fictitious ones. <p><u>ICT application process</u></p> <p>ACISAM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Normally ACISAM initiates the community process, but once it’s in place, the community team can approach ACISAM whenever they want to make a video. Some of these groups are so enthusiastic that they make 2 videos per month. <p><u>Are a variety of technologies offered to communities?</u></p> <p>ACISAM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They either offer the video production or “community radio” which consists on taping community messages and “broadcasting” from speakers placed in strategic locations of the community. The radio works best in rural areas where houses are far apart. Whereas video is used in places where community members can easily meet to view the videos in the evening. <p><u>Who is responsible for quality control during construction?</u></p> <p>ACISAM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality control depends on the technical advisors/facilitators from the organization that work with community teams. From the start of the project, there is constant monitoring going on and the community video group is co-responsible for that. Together they fill out monitoring forms, to make sure that they are keeping on production schedule, and are using the equipment appropriately. <p>Users</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They are clear on the responsibilities for writing up a video project, a plan for filming/editing, and the care of the camera. • Happy with the quality, believe it’s good quality. <p><u>Is there a formal handover of the ICT project?</u></p> <p>ACISAM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is no formal handover, but once project funds are dried up, the community has to finance its own video productions, although ACISAM continues to loan the video and editing equipment if the group presents a written video project, and continues to provide technical assistance as well. So basically handover to community means that they are now responsible for paying for trips to ACISAM’s office for post-production time, and for looking for their own equipment if possible. <p><u>What is done to monitor performance and use of ICTs once installed?</u></p> <p>Users</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A joint report is written with ACISAM’s facilitator, which serves as a monitoring procedure.
<p>Key linkages</p>	<p><u>How does the project link with target groups?</u></p> <p>ACISAM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The initial link is when ACISAM requests support from local government, with whom they sign an agreement. Then, they request that community members participate with them to design, film, edit and present their video programs. <p>Users</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They interview community leaders there and work on issues that they have knowledge about. They also have meetings with community members to talk

	<p>about the topics they would like to present.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ACISAM facilitator used to visit regularly when there was funding (from the Kellogg Foundation). Now he goes when they call him for the use of the equipment. <p><u>What links does the project have with local organisations (government, non-government, private sector)?</u></p> <p>ACISAM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Request collaboration and participation from local organizations when possible. <p>Users</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The sugar mill has collaborated with them, and even asked the video team to make a video of a sporting event they sponsored. They have also agreed to donate video equipment for the permanent use of the team. <p>Solórzano</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The main relationship is when they are investigating the real needs of the community; they come to interview different people here at the Sugar Mill. • There are no other organizations here with which the project has a relationship with. <p><u>What links does the project have with national organisations?</u></p> <p>ACISAM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Although they have many linkages with Salvadoran NGOs, financially they consider that their international linkages have been the most useful, especially the Swiss, who have partnered financially with them from the start and believed this to be a useful project. <p><u>What local sources of information have been identified (and accessed)?</u></p> <p>ACISAM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The community members are their source of information, mostly through interviews.
Intermediaries	<p><u>How many intermediary steps are involved in meeting the needs of the target group(s)?</u></p> <p>ACISAM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They don't consider there to be any intermediaries because the community teams involved in the project do their own editing and they know what they want. The final product is their basis for feedback and quality control. (Note: they might have misunderstood the question, because they do have community facilitators/technical advisors that serve as intermediaries) <p><u>What are the procedures for receiving / processing requests for information (how is this managed)?</u></p> <p>ACISAM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ACISAM communications team processes requests for video production, and they rely on the communities' work plan to make a decision. <p>Users</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They are basically in contact with ACISAM's facilitator (Sergio). The participants think of various themes or stories, and then they choose one with Sergio Sabrian's help. ACISAM then gives them the equipment and schedules their time in for editing. • The main problem is camera availability. (ACISAM has enough equipment for 6 groups to be working at the same time, but they're working in a lot of communities) • They think contact people interpret their needs correctly.

	<p><u>Where does editorial control lie when packaging / disseminating information?</u></p> <p>Users</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In their words: "Information is edited satisfactorily because we edit it ourselves and we know what we want."
<p>Capacity</p>	<p>ACISAM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noe, the communications project coordinator, studied Art in El Salvador, Social Communications in Spain, and Cinematography in Cuba. Apart from that, ACISAM has journalists, psychologists, and social workers on staff that participate with the project, especially for community feedback after a video presentation. <p>Solórzano</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He thinks there is adequate human resources for the video project. • The area he feels is lacking from the project is economic development. • They have no training or capacity building in technology. <p><u>Staff Equipment Training</u></p> <p>ACISAM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holistic training is provided including communication technology, access to technology, participation, and transformation of conflicts. Training is the basis for what they do, so their own training is multiplied in the communities. Their program implementation tells them what training needs there are. <p><u>User Training</u></p> <p>Users</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They received a scholarship from ACISAM to be trained by professional filmmakers, editors, and newsbroadcasters during 6 months. During this time they didn't make their own videos, but they practiced different filming techniques and film-making processes. Not everyone went at the same time, they would take turns on different weeks. The training was given after ACISAM staff came to the community and did a "community television" of their own to motivated people to participate. <p><u>How are participants for training selected?</u></p> <p>ACISAM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants are selected for training from the target communities. After ACISAM has done the initial work of promoting the use of video by showing how it's done, they ask community members, especially youth or specific targeted groups, if they would like to participate in the project. It's completely open, but usually a group of 10 - 15 people are willing to commit to the 6 months of training. ACISAM provides the "scholarship" for them to receive training in filming, writing scripts, editing, etc. <p>Users</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation is open to anybody. The only requirement is to be committed to the full training. • When asked if they were confident, they said: "At first it was hard, but now we feel confident." <p><u>Participation</u></p> <p>ACISAM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It's all completely participatory. ACISAM's goal is to work on constructing collective knowledge.
<p>Development benefits</p>	<p>ACISAM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The development targets are improving community self-esteem, identity, and participation. • The main benefit with the development process is that there is greater participation and communication within the community. They feel more like a

	<p>community, they feel they have access to the world by owning their own means of communication, and therefore they have a greater chance for development.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is evidence that the project has helped raise people's self-esteem through their own reflections at viewing the videos. The communities have mentioned gaining a sense of who they are, and of what the problems and issues in their community are. When they are in the process of reflection, ACISAM helps them to see themselves holistically. For example, if they recognize that there is family abuse, ACISAM helps them see that there are also resources within the community - loving parents, helpful teachers, etc. From this they create a collective dialogue which is then transformed into actions, and later, change. • Communication is used to help improve their environment and integrating the members of the community in the best way (helping people work together instead of against each other). <p>Users</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>quotes that demonstrate the changes in values and attitude the youths have gained from the project.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Any evidence? I think so, because now people can tell others what they feel and they can see the results." • "Information is used so we can see our own problems. For example, we dramatized a trip to the United States. When they were about to cross the river (on the border), two people died there, four were captured and put in prison, and only two passed." • "Now the majority of us want to continue working in this." • "I think an evidence is that the sugar mill now wants to hire us to work for them." • "Well, I've left all my vices so that I can work with these guys." (vices refer to smoking, drinking, gambling, etc.) <p>Solórzano</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes, he believes that the project has helped greatly, since the community can now talk about their problems and see the results in their own community. The youth dramatize the community's problems and also offer possible solutions to these problems, and in this way the community members are educated. • Also, the simple fact that the Sugar Mill has taken interest in the community is evidence that the project has had results.
Anecdotes	<p>ACISAM</p> <p>In one community, the ACISAM team got the mayor (an ex-guerilla) interested in the video project. The community videos didn't favor the mayor, as he received a lot of negative comments, but he started working harder on his social responsibilities. He also used the community video team to help him do propaganda for his work. When an outside donation came into the township, the mayor requested that the donation be used to give the camera team the latest digital video equipment, including digital editing equipment. ACISAM had to contract outside help to train the community team on digital filmmaking since not even ACISAM has managed to transfer to digital equipment yet.</p>