

EXPERIENCES OF SOCIAL PARTICIPATION IN THE RECOVERY OF VERNACULAR HERITAGE IN SOUTHERN ECUADOR

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ABSTRACT:

Since 2011, within the framework of a research project shared between the University of Cuenca (UC) and the Catholic University of Leuven (KU Leuven), several practical experiences were proposed and carried out in order to identify paths and actions that allow reversing a marked trend to the loss of built cultural assets, both in the rural and urban context. Most of these assets are made up of vernacular architecture built with technologies such as adobe or bahareque, which use the earth as an essential building material. From the beginning of the first intervention in Susudel (2011), it was important to carry out constant and sustained work with the respective communities and actors involved. It was necessary to inform them about the initiative, but, above all, to involve them consistently, completely and directly, throughout the process, in decision-making and in the search for solutions that were finally applied in the interventions. A comparison between all the interventions carried out from the year 2011 until 2018 show a very significant change of social involvement, both in quantity as well as in quality, with each new intervention. From an empirical and intuitive process, we have moved to a more technical, planned and structured one, based on participatory methodologies that allow a more intense and proactive involvement of communities in the search for solutions and commitments. The article analyzes the participatory process during 4 preventive conservation experiences applied in the town of Susudel and the city of Cuenca, in southern Ecuador, over the past 7 years.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Vernacular heritage in southern Ecuador

Earthen construction techniques in Ecuador date back to the pre-Inca period. These were adopted during the colonial and republican period and still persist, especially in the Andes region. In fact, the second province in this territory with the largest number of adobe buildings is Azuay, in the south of the country (García et. al., 2016). In this province, the vernacular earthen architecture has an important presence not only in rural areas, such as Susudel, but also in urban areas, such as Cuenca, which were listed as National Heritage (2013) and World Heritage (1999) respectively.

Vernacular architecture represents one of the most remarkable expressions of Andean culture. "It constitutes a heritage whose values respond to a historical testimony that is alive in the ways of inhabiting, customs, traditions, forms of social organization of the community; which marks its space by identifying it, responding in harmony with the environment; its daily experience, its recreation and insertion in daily life is what makes it possible to be a fundamental part of the cultural memory, of the identity of a people..." (Pesantez, 2011, p. 28). This architecture is a container of spaces where life is reproduced and in doing so it grants aesthetic and spiritual values from which the diverse popular knowledge of a society is born. It is understood in a complex way in all its components, both in the techniques that involve its construction, and the habits that it predisposes, and "in spite of the extensive literature available, nothing is so certain to understand it as the act of inhabiting it" (Montesinos, 2017, p. 84).

However, despite the relevance of the vernacular earthen architecture in Azuay, it can be considered one of the most threatened architectural heritage. Indeed, until the first decade of the 21st century, the efforts of public administrations focused on the conservation of monumental assets that represented less than 1% of the total inventoried heritage buildings. This vernacular earthen heritage presents a progressive deterioration, which predominantly affects that of lesser value considered modest or not monumental. Currently, in a socio-economic context guided by economic pressures and changes in cultural preferences introduced mainly due to migratory phenomena, the question arises: *How to favor processes for the conservation of modest vernacular earthen heritage?*

1.2 Four practical experiences of preventive conservation

In response to this unfavorable situation, more than 15 years ago, the Faculty of Architecture and Urbanism (FAUC) of the University of Cuenca (UC), began a way to carry out the practice of theoretical advances in the conservation of built heritage. Initially, in 2002, through its Chair of Heritage Conservation Option, and later, in 2007, in cooperation with the Catholic University of Leuven (KU Leuven, Belgium) through the consolidation of the World Heritage City (CPM) research team. This team refined an intervention model called "*Built Heritage Maintenance Campaigns*". On one hand, this model is an action research process, to solve emerging or preventive conservation problems in order to counteract the progressive deterioration of non-monumental heritage buildings. On the other hand, it is inspired by the traditional Andean work system, called *minga*, an ancestral collaborative organization system originated in the pre-Hispanic cultures of the Andean area, which allows the collective execution of works or actions of common interest.

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Thus, the first two maintenance campaigns were implemented in a rural context (Susudel, 2011 and 2013) and subsequently the work model was transferred to an urban context (Cuenca, San Roque neighborhood, buildings block, 2013-2014; El Vergel neighbourhood, Calle de Las Herrerías, 2017-2018) (Achig-Balarezo, Tenze 2019).

1.2.1 Susudel and the community organization in *minga*.

Susudel, of Cañarí origin, belongs to the canton of San Felipe de Oña. Between approximately 1460 and 1480 A.D. approximately, Susudel was part of "Cañaribamba", one of the 3 conformations of Inca domain in the area. With the Spanish usurpation of the Ecuadorian territory in the 16th century, the economic and domination system known as *encomiendas* or "surrender" of the territories of ethnic groups of the country were imposed on the conquerors for their service to the King. In contrast to colonial settlements in urban areas of the country, the Susudel settlement was the result of a colonial agricultural production mode spread across the Andean region, called *Hacienda*. In it, the indigenous people worked in exchange for food and a place to live. This economic and social institution lasted until the agrarian reform in 1964. Subsequently, the workers took possession of the land next to the main access road to the *Hacienda*. Since then, Susudel has grown on the edge of the main access road, rather than around a square. According to the last census of 2010, Susudel has about 1188 inhabitants, the majority (53%) are women and 12% of its population is over 65 years old (PDOT Susudel 2019). The parochial head of Susudel has an average population density of 3 hab / Ha. In this sector the use of housing is variable (16.03% - 42.37%), with a greater concentration of housing around the central square of Susudel Centro and in Nuevo Susudel. Its economy is based on agriculture for sale and self-consumption and the manufacturing industry, especially brick production and sale. The latter is considered the main source of income (POU Susudel 2017-2037). The production of bricks and adobe are considered traditional activities for its inhabitants who have taken advantage of the quality of the earth where they live.

In 2011, recognizing the high obsolescence degree of the old vernacular buildings, the available knowledge about traditional construction systems and the high level of community organization of its inhabitants, CPM decided to promote the first maintenance campaign, in approximately 48 buildings of Las Posesiones street, in collaboration with local institutions and community members. And later, in 2013 the same model of joint work for the conservation of the Susudel heritage cemetery was implemented (Cardoso et al., 2017).



Figures 1 and 2. Susudel maintenance campaigns. Left Possesiones Street. Right Cemetery.

Maintenance campaigns were preceded by meetings with members of the Susudel community. In those meetings led by the UC, the most relevant maintenance work was explained to the beneficiaries, and the work was organized. During the first campaign, a time of more than three months was required to prepare the work, which was finally executed in five days. Unlike the second campaign in which less time was invested, mainly due to the collaboration of the parish authority, which made efforts to involve neighboring communities such as Sanglia, San Gerónimo, Susudel Centro, Susudel Nuevo,

Raricucho, among others, to dedicate a full day of work in *minga* in maintenance works for their common cemetery. In both campaigns, some people participated in the *minga* with the support of their families and neighbors, while others provided food to about 150 people (Cardoso et al., 2019).

1.2.2 Cuenca and the multi-actor *minga*.

The collaborative work in *minga* experienced in the rural area of Susudel moved to the urban and heritage area of Cuenca. With 603,269 inhabitants (INEC, 2017), Cuenca is the third most populous city in Ecuador. It was founded in 1557 and today it is a regional agricultural and administrative center, where the local population has mixed with successive generations of immigrants. Most of its buildings date from the eighteenth century, but urban architecture was modernized with economic prosperity in the second half of the twentieth century when it became an important export center for quinine and the famous Panama hat (toquilla straw). This moment of economic growth caused the disappearance of colonial houses, which were replaced by an architectural mix of local and European architecture (Albornoz, 2008). The last inventory of heritage buildings (2010) recorded 3,154 heritage buildings. Most of this architecture demonstrates earthen architecture traditional techniques, which include decorative elements on the facade, interior spaces with decorated surfaces, details such as moldings, stucco, walls and ceiling decoration. However, this architecture is extremely fragile due to the low resistance of its materials. According to the Preventive Conservation Diagnostic Plan (DAHP, 2011), 8% of all heritage buildings require urgent intervention and 18% require medium-term intervention. In this context, within the historic urban area of Cuenca, two sets of heritage buildings with minor vernacular architecture were selected, in order to apply the maintenance campaign model to them. The first set of 22 buildings corresponded to one block from the San Roque neighborhood, while the second set of 21 buildings were located at Las Herrerías Street in the El Vergel neighborhood. Both areas shared a common physical organization that has been partially preserved since 1920-1950.

In addition, the physical characteristics of the heritage buildings were similar to those of the Susudel heritage buildings, that is, modest examples of vernacular earthen architecture with an advanced state of deterioration. In this case, meetings were also promoted with the community, to present the studies and explain the criteria for the selection of buildings, such as the heritage value of the property, its state of conservation and the owners availability to participate in the process. In Las Herrerías, the criteria of the socioeconomic condition of the owners was added to guarantee support to the most vulnerable groups. In addition, great efforts were made to involve public institutions and other public and private organizations in the process.



Figures 3 and 4. Maintenance campaigns in Cuenca. Left San Roque. Right El Vergel neighbourhood at Las neighborhood Herrerías Street.

The planning process in the urban area required more time than in the rural area. It took almost a year of preparatory technical work and community meetings for the organization between the community and the institutions. In this organization process, it was very useful to share the experience of rural area with the

Susudel community, so that people could get a general idea about the objective of the process, the actors involved and the achievements. Both the characteristics of the heritage and the activities carried out were similar, however, while in the rural area the interventions lasted less than a week, the urban ones lasted approximately two months in each case.

	SUSUDEL Posesiones (2011)	SUSUDEL Cemetery (2013)	CUENCA San Roque (2013-2014)	CUENCA El Vergel (2017-2018)	
PLANNING (Phases I y II) (days)	90	90	360	360	
INTERVENTION (Phases III) (days)	5	5	60	60	
INTERVENTIONED BUILDINGS	48	1	22	21	
ACTORS					
Academy	Students	14	6	39	79
	Professors researchers	5	4	10	16
Public Institutions		3	8	8	15
Associations		-	-	1	3
Private organization		1	1	5	1
Community	Beneficiary families	48	1	22	21

Table 1. Comparative maintenance campaigns

1.3 The ladder of social participation

From the beginning of the first intervention in Susudel (2011), it was important to carry out constant and sustained work with the respective communities and actors involved. It was necessary to inform them about the initiative, but, above all, to involve them consistently, completely and directly, throughout the process, in decision-making and in the search for solutions that were finally applied in the interventions. Therefore, social participation in Maintenance Campaigns is increasingly understood as the way in which territorial actors in intervention areas are mobilized or "activated" to carry out a preventive conservation process in a group of heritage buildings of modest vernacular architecture. These campaigns position and unite groups to research, plan, execute, and monitor the various activities that the process requires. Thus, the questions that motivate this article are: *What progress has been seen in these processes in terms of social participation? How to make sure that the minga, as a traditional organizational practice, can enhance not only the collaboration in the intervention phase but also the involvement in the entire conservation process and sustainability over time? What challenges are there in view of future experiences?*

The participation ladder is a figure that can help assess the different levels and degrees of participation that are being promoted in working with people. Among the various participation ladders that exist, the example presented here could be used to evaluate this specific case (Figure 5). It is not a model and does not illustrate a process to follow (of ascent), but rather it gives the idea of the "sense" towards which it would be "ideal" for these experiences to walk. This ladder presents six ways of focusing participation, which can also be combined according to the moment of the process. The participation criteria or indicators in the mentioned ladder can be both in quantity and quality. The first step indicates the Information (how, where and to whom it arrives), in the second the Attendance (who attends specific events and how they take care of themselves), in the third the Consultation and/or Collaboration (who is consulted and/or who collaborates punctually), in the fourth the Implication (who are part of the different groups), in the fifth the Decision making (how horizontality develops, respect for what has been agreed) and, in the sixth the Base Democratic

Organization (how the entire organization is working integrally) (Alberich et. Al., 2015).

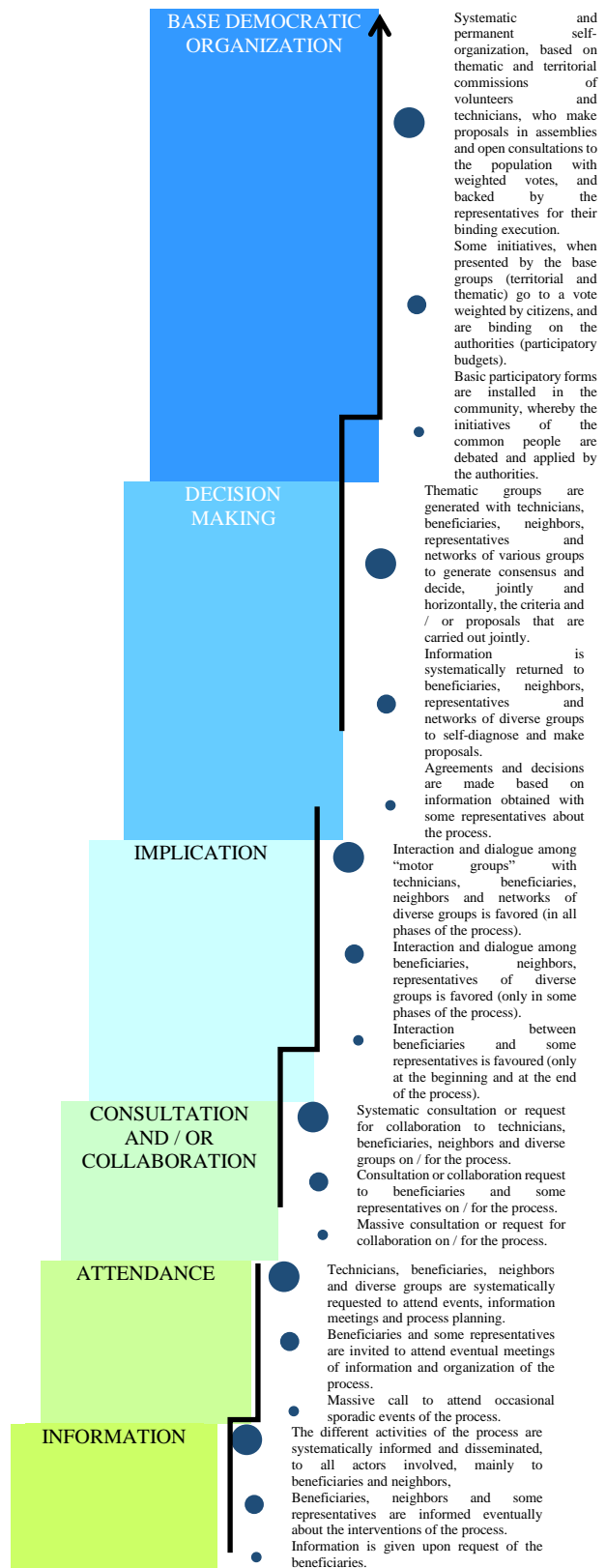


Figure 5. Participation ladder

*The size of the circle expresses the degrees within each level, ranging from the smallest to the highest degree to the extent that participation opens up to the plurality of actors involved.

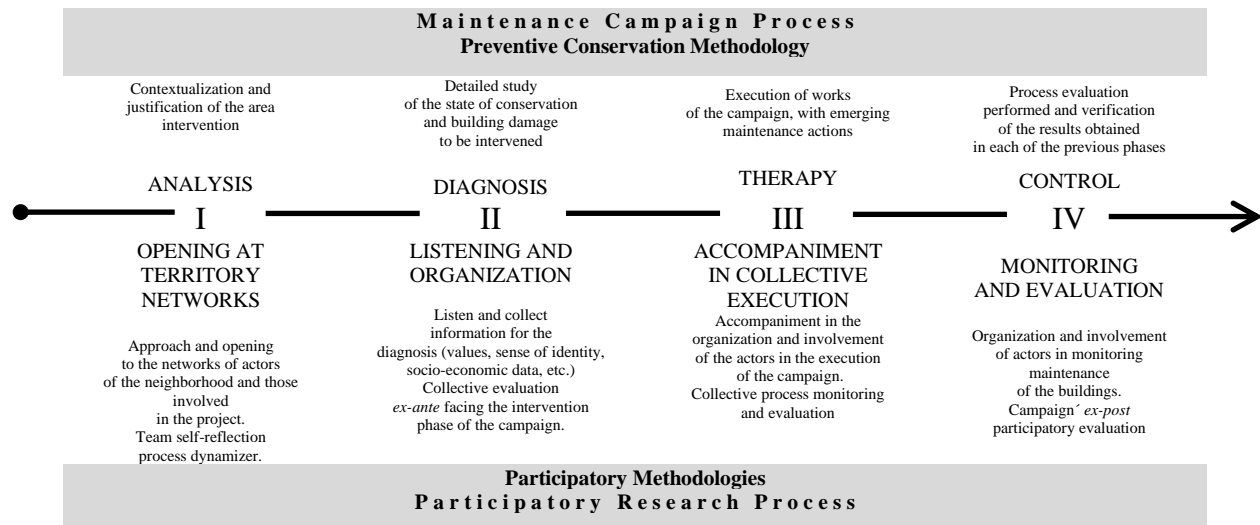


Table 2. Methodological articulation in the preventive conservation process

2. METHODOLOGY

Between the first campaign (2011) in Susudel and the last campaign (2018) in Cuenca, there is a very important qualitative leap in quantity and quality of social involvement. From an empirical and intuitive process, we have moved to a more technical, planned and structured one, based on participatory methodologies. This has allowed a more intense and proactive involvement of the different actors in the search for solutions and commitments. This article analyzes the process of social participation of these four experiences according to the quantitative and qualitative criteria of the ladder, to identify those clues that would enable progress towards the integrality and sustainability of these processes.

2.1 The methodological articulation process

The methodological framework of these preventive conservation processes is mainly based on the International Council for the Conservation of Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS)¹ proposal, which organizes the process into four phases: Anamnesis or Analysis for the search of context data, Diagnosis for the determination of the deterioration causes of the assets to be intervened, Therapy for the application of corrective measures and Control to measure the effectiveness of the interventions.

In the first two maintenance campaigns carried out in Susudel, this framework allowed to be involved into the ways of doing, thinking and feeling of community actors, who were integrated, together with other actors, in a collaborative work of an academic intervention initiative of theoretical-practical training. The lessons learned from these first experiences arise, among others, when the initial planning precepts of the academic promoter group overflow. One of these overflows was in the organization field, with the expertise of the community *minga*, which meant moving from collaboration to involvement, leading to a shared role among actors. Thus, the challenge of replicating the campaign model in the urban environment was raised, in the case of the San Roque

neighborhood, which was linked to the academic commitment to deepen the practical achievement of the different paradigm changes (preventive conservation, values conservation) that were being reflected. Although the preparatory planning phases required more detailed paperwork and studies, the analysis in the San Roque campaign also put the analysis in the *minga* intervention phase in which multiple actors collaborated (owners and neighbors of the community, professional technicians of the public institutions, private companies and the academy). This allowed clarifying new aspects of the heritage field, which beyond the historical and aesthetic values emerge strongly thanks to the interaction between these actors. With these supports, mixed working groups were formed, in all cases led by the UC group. Professors and construction managers of the university and technical staff of the FAUC-CPM supervised the work of a bricklayer expert in earthen construction technologies, who worked in turn with a group of students and construction assistants (Armed Forces personnel and owners and / or families of the owners of the intervened buildings). The logistics, communication and dissemination teams were made up entirely of people from the FAUC-CPM. Meanwhile, technical teams of the institutions supervised the rigor and compliance with the planning established for each case.

These three previous experiences, together with practical experiences of other CPM research lines (“Historical urban landscape” and “Heritage as a resource for development”), highlighted the need to include new methodological approaches in the formulation of the new campaign in the El Vergel neighborhood, Calle de Las Herrerías. This is how we seek to articulate the methodology of preventive conservation with participatory research methodologies. From a dialectical and sociopraxical perspective, it starts from the consideration of the object to be investigated as a subject (protagonist of the research) and in which the purpose of the research is social transformation (Alberich et al., 2015). Using some specific participatory techniques but without rejecting the use of quantitative and qualitative techniques, the participatory approach uses not only information, attendance, consultation or collaboration, but above all, participation in collective decision making, opening processes to people's creativity (Villasante,

¹ The ICOMOS Preventive Conservation strategy is inserted in the UC-FAUC in 2007 when the vIirCPM research project, now a World Heritage City, was

opened, where the methodological principles and tools are developed so that in 2011 the model of the Maintenance Campaigns is raised.

2010). Next, taking the participation ladder of Figure 5 as an evaluation instrument, the levels of participation reached in all the campaigns carried out to date are analyzed. The results of the methodological process derived from this methodological articulation that was applied in the last campaign in El Vergel-Las Herrerías are especially valued. It sought to reorganize the activities in each and every one of the phases linking the most creative contributions, both theoretical and practical, to facilitate a continuous co-creation process, which would allow all those involved to achieve common goals (Table 2).

2.2 Documentation and analysis with transect walks and self-reflections

The objective of the research activities in the Analysis phase of the preventive conservation process is to gather information from the greatest diversity of sources, to contextualize and approach the heritage asset and its values. In the four maintenance campaigns, these activities were carried out exclusively by the UC through the academic group, students and teachers of the Chair of the Conservation Option, based on the review and interpretation of secondary sources information (thesis, books, articles, etc.). The approaches with other actors were informative. The initiative and some results of the previous studies were disclosed or, as in the case of San Roque, the experience in the implementation of Campaigns in the rural area was shown. However, in the El Vergel Campaign, integrated activities stimulated the participation in this phase of both the internal UC motor group and the other actors involved, using new tools to achieve a closer approach to the area and the community to intervene. On one hand, there was a process of self-reflection of the UC group before starting. This included a conceptual and methodological analysis, an evaluation of the results of the previous urban campaign in San Roque (SWOT matrix) and a network mapping of actors -directly or indirectly- involved in the new campaign in El Vergel (socio-gram). On the other hand, for the first technical analysis, transect walks were carried out in the neighborhood and the intervention area with residents of the Las Herrerías Street and academic and institutional technicians, who supported the pre-registration and assessment form; collective construction workshops were also held, such as the timeline of the neighborhood elaborated with the community.

2.3 Reading and technical interpretation combined with socio-dramas and collective organization

In the diagnostic phase, the activities focus on making a global reading of the condition of the asset and its values from the analysis developed in the previous phase. This reading details the historical and technical-constructive characteristics of the buildings, as well as the evaluation of the state of conservation and damages that, together with the valuation of each asset, determine the selection of buildings to intervene during the maintenance campaign. In all four campaigns this was concretized with the completion of architectural surveys and damage diagnosis sheets. However, in the El Vergel campaign, this work was reinforced with listening activities to the neighboring owners or tenants of the Las Herrerías street, as first involved in the process, for which surveys (socio-economic data of the families) and interviews (values and sense of identity) were applied. This served to redefine, always directed by the UC group, the criteria for the selection of the buildings to intervene. Also in the campaign in El Vergel, at the end of this phase, participatory activities were designed, such as a workshop in which the socio-drama technique was used, to assess, among others, attitudes and motivations towards the next phase of execution of the works, and provoke a moment of self-reflection of all involved.

2.4 Therapy with the multi-actor *minga*

This phase covers the process of design and execution of the intervention proposals, which also implies the organization of those who have to carry out these proposals. From the diagnosis, for the four campaigns, a concrete intervention plan developed by the UC group for each building to be intervened was derived. This plan was then presented to all the actors, which allowed to outline technical reports, budgets and work schedules.

It should be stressed that the coordination of the four campaigns was led by the UC, making from the beginning of the process, visits to different institutional, associative, private and community actors to motivate them to collaborate in this intervention phase. Indeed, these previous steps for the collaboration of multiple actors in *minga*, materialized in this phase and had a similar functional organization scheme for all cases. The composition of the work groups remained the same as the initial rural scheme in the four campaigns, with the difference that the owners of urban buildings were not part of any of the groups. Their participation was through the donation of meals, provision of spaces for bathrooms and storage spaces, and the payment of labor, as suggested by the UC. It is worth noting the particularities that exist regarding the involvement of the actors in this phase. In rural areas, in Susudel, in the Las Posiciones street campaign, the beneficiaries appropriated the process and carried out the works in their homes with the help of family members whom they called on to be included in the great *minga* of the campaign. This led to the reconfiguration of activities and staff assignment. In the second Susudel campaign (cemetery), the actors had the experience of the first campaign and the process was very internalized, which generated mixed groups that decided around the proposed works, and shared with the UC group the coordination of the execution. In this case, it was the mayor of Susudel who called the other communities that use the cemetery to participate in the campaign. On the other hand, in the urban environment, the election of San Roque as a pilot area for the application of the campaign model had to do with the good disposition of the community, especially of the Neighborhood Board. However, the coordination of the UC continued to be essential, since until this phase, the interaction between the actors was minimal. At this stage, during the second urban campaign in El Vergel Calle Las Herrerías, interaction and dialogue between the actors was favored. This especially happened between public institutions (whose number is high compared to other campaigns) and other organizations. At one point, joint inter-institutional meetings were held. However, these types of meetings were not repeated at another time during the campaign, reinforcing the leadership of the UC as a driver of these initiatives, managing agreements, building permits, public purchases (materials), etc. The execution and monitoring of budgets, work schedules in all campaigns was carried out by the UC group, integrating for its verification, accompaniment and on-site supervision technical personnel of institutions such as the Decentralized Autonomous Government (GAD) of Susudel, the Municipality of Cuenca and the National Institute of Cultural Heritage (INPC).

2.5 Control and technical evaluation of results with collective process monitoring

In this phase the evaluation of the behavior of the assets in their new condition is proposed through a monitoring system with the periodic application of predefined tools (questionnaires, checklists, reports, etc.) and the delivery of maintenance manuals to the beneficiary families. In this sense, in the rural area, in the two Maintenance Campaigns in Susudel, there is still no activity to evaluate the physical state of the buildings intervened after the

works. In the urban area, in San Roque, a maintenance booklet was delivered to each family, as well as to the beneficiaries at Las Herrerías Street in El Vergel. Also, in this last campaign, based on consultations and collaboration of the beneficiaries themselves, more friendly instruments are being developed to perform the damage survey in order to be better used by the users. On the other hand, the innovative contribution in both campaigns in the urban area of Cuenca, was that the control phase was activated throughout the process, to monitor ongoing activities and their impacts. In San Roque this was done through the application of surveys (before, during and after), while the UC group designed and prepared a maintenance booklet that was presented and delivered to the beneficiaries at the end of the works. In El Vergel the same surveys were reviewed and applied as in the previous campaign, to which some interviews were added. In addition, some participatory collective reflection workshops were designed before and during the campaign (using Diana's technique) in which the beneficiaries and the UC technical group were mainly involved. This phase of control of the buildings intervened in the Las Herrerías street is still underway under the leadership of the UC.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The comparative analysis of the preventive conservation processes has allowed us to observe some differences in the participation forms and degrees in each process in general and in their singular phases (Table 2).

PARTICIPACIÓN LEVELS*		Information	Assistance	Consultation and/or Collaboration	Implication	Decision making	Base democratic organization
CAMPAIGNS							
SUSUDEL POSISIONES phases	I	●	●	●	●	●	-
	II	●	●	●	●	●	-
	III	●	●	●	●	●	-
	IV	-	-	-	-	-	-
SUSUDEL CEMETERY phases	I	●	●	●	●	●	-
	II	●	●	●	●	●	-
	III	●	●	●	●	●	-
	IV	-	-	-	-	-	-
CUENCA SAN ROQUE phases	I	●	●	●	-	-	-
	II	●	●	●	●	●	-
	III	●	●	●	●	●	-
	IV	●	-	-	-	-	-
CUENCA EL VERGEL phases	I	●	●	●	●	●	-
	II	●	●	●	●	●	-
	III	●	●	●	●	●	-
	IV	●	●	●	●	●	-

Table 2. Participation levels in maintenance campaigns

*The size of the circle expresses the degrees within each level, ranging from the smallest to the highest degree to the extent that participation opens up to the plurality of actors involved.

A first comparison can be made between the processes of the rural and urban areas, since they have been carried out in different contexts and dynamics. In Susudel, in both campaigns, the UC initiative directly converged with the interest of the people in helping to maintain their homes, and later, their cemetery. The

less planned and more intuitive process made great leaps in the information, which was transmitted from voice to voice, or in the attendance and collaboration that responded to the organization proposed by the UC. Creative overflows occurred in both processes that not only favored implication but also collective decision-making. This had a high degree in the cemetery campaign as these work groups were formed to analyze and decide around different technical alternatives. From one campaign to the other, a certain capacity for initiative was installed in the community and in the actors involved, which stimulated that each actor developed its role autonomously, always with the support of the UC group. However, this never happened in any of the urban area campaigns in Cuenca. Here, the processes were more planned and structured, with requirements for a more rigorous systematization of studies, and a very conditioned management by the weight of regulations and procedures. In addition, because urban campaigns were developed in less cohesive communities and with no technical capacity installed, such as those in rural areas, the processes took longer and required more resources. In terms of participation, support with participatory methodologies in the second urban campaign, led to notable leaps in information, more direct and systematic, the most pluralistic calls and consultations, and collaboration not only at the time of execution, but from the beginning of the process. Thus, it seems that a satisfactory degree was achieved in the involvement of all the actors, in some moments of the process that has left important challenges in sharing prominence and making joint decisions.

3.1 Comparative phase analysis

In the first phase of anamnesis, in the rural area, documentation and technical studies were carried out in the UC, nurtured by an initiative that gradually echoed the expectations of the community and its representatives, expressed in the increasingly busy informational meetings. In the urban area, in the case of El Vergel, the UC has advanced through self-reflection, jumping from the non-participant observation in San Roque to the transect walks in El Vergel for the study of the assets and their relationship with the environment. In addition, important steps have been taken to move from a list of key collaborators, towards the strategic leap of identifying their relationships and designing a more plural *listening*. However, the reflection remains to be deepened about the objectives of the campaign and to make explicit the expectations and interests of all those involved, in order to guarantee their congruence, improving also the reflection of the “for what” of the Maintenance Campaign so that it affects in its effectiveness and also in the motivation of all.

In the diagnostic phase, in rural areas, between one campaign and the other, there is a leap from collaboration to implication. Undoubtedly, the spirit of extending from one house to more houses the contribution of carrying out small maintenance works by organizing a job in *minga* became a shared idea in both campaigns that added initiatives from the beginning. More so in the second campaign than in the first, in this phase all the supports and their organization were already consolidated. In the urban sphere, it is worth highlighting the UC group's reflection on the new context in which it was going to intervene and the openness to methodological and instrumental adjustments to face its role in the process and improve, based on the challenges posed by the rural experiences. From the San Roque campaign to the Vergel-Herrerías campaign, the introduction of the socio-economic survey and the interviews supported by an actor mapping were innovations that undoubtedly fostered a more inclusive involvement.

In the therapy phase, during the rural experience, the UC did manage to open a path of co-creation by sharing leadership and decision making. In the urban experience, as indicated above, although the effort to join more institutional actors in the El Vergel campaign is highlighted compared to that of San Roque, the challenge is to work on strengthening relations between them. Focus the efforts and the activities towards the integration of the various actors also in the study and planning phases and not only in the intervention phase. Collaboration is important, with information and plural consultation, but even more so is the jump from the consultation to the increasingly plural collective construction.

In the control phase, in addition to focusing only on the monitoring of the new physical state of the intervened buildings, the UC proposal in urban campaigns was to integrate participatory evaluation activities from the beginning. This has allowed to unlink the exclusivity of this activity to the expert technicians, and give the opportunity to be the same people involved who jointly analyze the causes and consequences of what is being done. Self-reflection exercises with socio-dramas and Dianas along with the incipient conformation of a mixed monitoring team, opened a possible path so that everyone could contribute their vision of the process. This could enhance the use of the manuals by the beneficiary families, since there would be a previous accompaniment work in the evaluation whose responsibility does not only fall on them.



Figures 6 and 7. Left: Maintenance Primer. Right: El Vergel Campaign monitoring group, evaluation session.

We have to work to share the leadership or prominence of the UC with the rest of the actors, in all phases of the process. In this sense, as these campaigns have been carried out, the importance of listening to more voices has been recognized, not only to consult them, ask for collaboration or gather their opinions, but to incorporate them into the campaign's reflection-action process from the beginning, defining well for each phase the limits and spaces for participation. This has to do with the need to return back the information by planning interaction and dialogue meetings between all those involved, to collectively interpret the data and assess the successes and errors together deciding the paths of the proposal. Consequently, it is imperative to implicate everyone involved in the design of the campaign organization, where everyone has the opportunity to choose what they can contribute and how. This is directly linked to the plural inclusion of actors from the earliest stages, which ensures that the leaderships are distributed or assigned once the specific actions to lead are defined.

4. CONCLUSIONS

Ultimately, the results of this analysis reveal that the Maintenance Campaigns model, in addition to the physical improvement of heritage buildings, can enhance social participation by (re)activating the networks of actors and their

plural inclusion in the process. This has a direct and visible impact on the conservation of built heritage, because on the one hand it reveals new values and on the other it affects a change of relations between actors that could give sustainability to long-term conservation. Although the meeting spaces between different actors are the first step towards participation, it would be better if it were strengthened with concrete actions, such as in the Maintenance Campaigns, so the meeting does not remain as a mere exchange. However, these campaigns, being processes that remain visible and active during relatively short periods of time, still fail to consolidate in the medium and long term the paths of interaction and dialogue that are favored during the experience.

The comparative analysis of the Maintenance Campaigns in rural and urban areas, inserted in heritage sites, show some important achievements, as well as pending challenges. Among the advances it is worth highlighting the commitment to overcome the multidisciplinary vision (encased in academics) to a multi-actor one (which opens up to territorial and sectoral networks), and that ventures into trans-disciplinarity. Therefore, as noted, it is not enough to increase the number and diversity of actors, as if it is to foster their involvement and implication in all phases of the conservation process and not only during the intervention phase. In both cases in the rural area, the degrees of participation advanced significantly towards more integrative forms. However, in both cases of the urban sphere, the degrees of participation have not changed significantly, nor has the inclusion of a greater diversity of actors since the initial stages and in the entire process. As recommendations, it would be convenient to open *listening* spaces, where the exchange and collaboration of the actors involved transcend towards the implication. That would come from doing and reflecting together, with methodological devices that encourage and empower it. It is also necessary to expand the limits of decision making in the processes, foster the conformation of initiative groups that transcend the academic space considering the integration of interested persons (not representative) of territorial base, and finally activate follow-up commissions that mobilize diverse resources. To summarize, the small but important leaps observed especially in the case of El Vergel towards greater participation must continue to be boosted, especially to ensure that the process is internalized towards the later stages and causes new synergies, to enhance the role of cultural heritage as the axis of good living strategies.

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