

THIS IS A BRIEF INTRO TO THE PRACTICE OF COMMUNITY CONSULTATIONS



SO... WHAT IS A COMMUNITY CONSULTATION?

IT'S AN ORGANIZING TOOL — "A SPACE WHERE AN INFORMED COLLECTIVE CAN MAKE DECISIONS REGARDING THE ADMINISTRATION OF LAND, RESOURCES, AND OTHER ASPECTS OF COMMUNITY LIFE."

LIKE A VOTE?

PARTLY! BUT THERE ARE OTHER ELEMENTS:

- POPULAR EDUCATION BEFORE VOTE
- DEBATE AND CONSENSUS-REACHING PROCESS
- INDIGENOUS ANCESTRAL PRACTICE
- ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS TO COMMEMORATE COMMUNITY RESISTANCE

WHEN ARE THEY USED?

Indigenous & campesino communities use them when confronting RESOURCE EXTRACTION PROJECTS like GOLD, SILVER, & NICKEL MINES & HYDROELECTRIC DAMS

IN 1997, THE CONGRESS PASSED A MINING LAW THAT lowered barriers to investment, cut taxes for foreign companies, granted them access to local resources

IN 1996, WHEN THE 36-YEAR INTERNAL ARMED CONFLICT ENDED WITH THE SIGNING OF THE PEACE ACCORDS, THE GUATEMALAN GOVERNMENT BEGAN TO OPEN UP MORE AND MORE TO PRIVATE INVESTMENT FROM COMPANIES SEEKING TO PROFIT OF THE COUNTRY'S NATURAL RESOURCES



OVER 2 MILLION people have participated in consultations since then. 14 of departments in Guatemala have participated. 22 of consultations were in 2005

TO COMBAT THE WAVE OF EXTRACTIVE PROJECTS, LAND DEFENDERS HAVE USED CONSULTATIONS AS A STRATEGY THAT BOTH DRAWS ON ANCESTRAL DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES AND LEVERAGES THE POWER OF

AN INTERNATIONAL LAW THAT RECOGNIZES INDIGENOUS PEOPLE'S INHERENT RIGHT TO FREE, PRIOR, INFORMED CONSENT in decisions that would affect their land, water, lives, & ways of life.

IN SOME CASES, CONSULTATIONS HAVE BEEN PART OF SUCCESSFUL STRATEGIES TO STOP THE CONSTRUCTION OF A PROJECT BEFORE IT BEGAN (LIKE THE HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT IN SAN PABLO, SAN MARCOS) AND TEMPORARILY SUSPEND A FULLY OPERATING PROJECT (LIKE THE SILVER MINE IN SAN RAFAEL LAS FLORES, SANTA ROSA).

LUCAS JORGE, indigenous leader in Ixquis, Huehuetenango: "In my community, we already held a consultation but the hydroelectric company doesn't respect it. They have invaded our territory, occupied by the Army and the police. The presence of security forces opens old wounds from what we lived through during the Internal Armed Conflict."



IN SPITE OF THE CHALLENGES OF CO-OPERATION AND VIOLATIONS OF THE RIGHT TO CONSULTATION, LAND STEWARDS ((INDIGENOUS & CAMPESINO)) CONTINUE TO EMPLOY THIS TOOL FOR DIRECT DEMOCRACY IN THEIR FIGHT FOR JUSTICE & RECOGNITION

..A new form of genocide is hidden in this bill; as Indigenous Peoples, the State will only recognize our existence when a committee decides when, where, and how by REGULATING THEM AS A STATE-CONTROLLED BUREAUCRATIC PROCESS IN ORDER TO ENSURE A MORE STABLE INVESTMENT CLIMATE"

A BILL CURRENTLY BEFORE GUATEMALAN CONGRESS SEEKS TO CO-OPERATE CONSULTATIONS BY REGULATING THEM AS A STATE-CONTROLLED BUREAUCRATIC PROCESS IN ORDER TO ENSURE A MORE STABLE INVESTMENT CLIMATE"

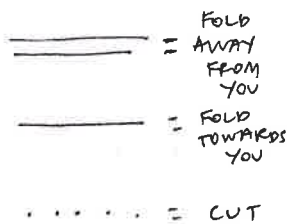
A consultation in sacapulas, quiché in April 2011. photo: NISQUA

A consultation in Mataguezscuintla, Jalapa. photo: Prensa Comunitaria

ASSEMBLY STEPS:

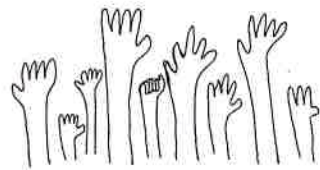
1. MAKE CREASES ↘
2. MAKE CUTS
3. ASSEMBLE!
(LIKE AN ACCORDION)

ASSEMBLY KEY:



AN INTRODUCTION TO

COMMUNITY CONSULTATIONS IN GUATEMALA



O. PANDELF 2019

- "community consultation" - NISGA (p. 2, 5, 11)
- "model of resistance" - NISGA (p. 2, 5, 11)
- "infografía: constitutivos comunitarios en Guatemala" - CEPPAS (p. 5)
- "Guatemala court confirms suspension of jade mining licenses" - Reuters, SoftMocha (p. 11)
- see ACADET's community consultation petition on the "Take Action" page of NISGA.org

SOURCES & FURTHER READING: