

The environment of the university commune: a human development enhancer

Bernardo Salgado Guerrero¹

bsalgado@ups.edu.ec

<https://orcid.org/0009-0001-9457-8924>

Paola Carrera Hidalgo²

pcarrera@ups.edu.ec

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7666-3703>

Introduction

In the beginning, people considered the community as a centre where social relations were woven through its members' interaction and contribution to collective development. It was a space of meeting, coexistence and learning where various activities were carried out; from teaching and learning to political decision-making. One factor that influenced the appearance of communes is the struggle and defence for self-determination and resources. These communes worked under self-governing regimes³ to manage local issues, see-

-
- 1 Lecturer and researcher at the Salesian Polytechnic University. MSc. in Development Cooperation, Specialization in Integral Planning of Local Development, University of Valencia. PhD candidate.
 - 2 Researcher and lecturer at the Salesian Polytechnic University. MSc. in Project Planning for Rural Development and Sustainable Management, Polytechnic University of Madrid.
 - 3 The forms of self-government for the management of common goods must guarantee equitable access to, democratic control and protection in time of the common pool resource. Self-organization implies "a strong capacity for collective action (...) [and] a high degree of social capital" (Ramis, 2013, p. 119).

king to manage resources to become self-sufficient with a stronger economy (Azzellini, 2017).

With the emergence of private property, Society began to organize itself differently, giving rise to a number of social conflicts. Modes of production evolved gradually and shifted from a “primitive” community, where social organization was horizontal and a sense of community prevailed within daily activities, to a market society that seeks efficiency in all forms of production (Cameron & Neal, 2015).

Under the market logic, the progress and development of countries is measured through macro-economic indicators, which neglect important areas such as education, health, social security and poverty (Stiglitz, Sen, & Fitoussi, 2008). For this reason, new approaches have emerged, for example, the Economy of the Common Good (EBC),⁴ human development⁵ and the capability approach, that seek to measure well-being from a humanistic perspective to reclaim a sense of community and put the person at the centre. This approach includes working for the common good, promoting freedom, dignity of human beings and enhancing what they are capable of doing and being (Ellerani, 2017, p. 161).

-
- 4 The Economy of the Common Good is a movement that arose with the objective of rethinking the concept of an economy based solely on the accumulation of capital and economic growth. Instead, it focuses on the common good. Christian Felber (2012), initiator of the movement, proposes a series of human values that, within this model, contribute to the construction of the common good: human dignity, solidarity, ecological sustainability, social justice, democratic participation, transparency.
 - 5 Alkire and Deneulin (2009) have proposed four procedures or principles to understand human development: (i) Equity includes the distribution of justice among human groups, access to opportunities and affirmative actions. (ii) Efficiency implies the optimal use of resources to promote the development of individual and community capacities. (iii) Participation and empowerment, so that people become agents and make decisions that allow their environment to be positively transformed. (iv) Sustainability, so that development, in all spheres, lasts over time.

The EBC aims to co-construct an economic model in favour of the common good that bases its economic relations on cooperation and collaboration, and its political-social relations on democracy. For this, there must be rules and incentives that generate the right conditions to achieve true human and social development (Felber, 2012). Civil society has an important role in this model and therefore all human activity should contribute to the development of values and participatory dialogue (Gómez-Alvarez Díaz, Morales Sánchez, & Rodríguez Morilla, 2017).

With reference to the above, human development with a focus on the person has a close relationship with the capability approach⁶, a concept developed by Amartya Sen that introduced to a new economic and social science paradigm. The key is the development of people's abilities through *functioning* (highly valued activities that contribute to the "well-being" of the person), *capability* (freedom to perform activities - *functioning*) and *agency* (ability to achieve goals and be agents of action and change) (Nussbaum & Sen, 2009, p. 31).

Sen (2009) states that the capability approach is an intellectual discipline that focuses on the evaluation of: the achievements and freedoms of people to know what they are capable of doing (capabilities) and achieving, and to know the degree of satisfaction with one's life, beyond the accumulation of material assets / resources. It relates to human development because it focuses on aspects of people's quality of life including, but not limited to, public health, environmental protection, sustainability, education, welfare and public policies (Robeyns, 2017).

6 It is complex to make a literal translation of "capability approach". According to the approach proposed by Amartya Sen, the various studies in Spanish translate it as *capacit-action*. **Translator's Note** - Such a term plays on the Spanish words for capacities (*capacidad*) and action (*acción*).

Through human development and the capability approach, people can strengthen their capacities within educational environments that creates a supportive environment. In this context, higher education should assess people's potential and promote in them the ability to act (Alessandrini, 2017). Nussbaum affirms that the purpose of development is that people live fully, creatively, developing their potential, building a meaningful life, according to human dignity (2001).

Acquisition of these capacities in different environments (especially educational), allows people to become architects of their own lives. To achieve this, they need freedom of expression, of association and freedom to be educated without fear (Alkire & Deneulin, 2009). For this reason, from the human development and the capability approach, education must be understood from a new perspective, since access to it creates a tool that promotes social progress and highlights inequalities (Cejudo, 2006).

In this new approach, education should be conceived as a space where innovation and entrepreneurship are promoted as fundamental pillars of new knowledge. This would open students' mind, allow them to identify opportunities, and promote entrepreneurial activities (Ozgem & Minsky, 2007), in an environment that enhances capabilities, provides opportunity to grow, and contributes to the common good.

The educational environment –a common place– that enhances capabilities

In the last century, the pedagogical model in education, like the economy, has had as its main task “to produce human and social capital capable of consuming the productivity and efficiency of the market”. For this reason, this educational model faces a challenge in imple-

menting bespoke training and flexible, creative policies that promote the self-realization of academic communities (Margiotta, 2017, p. 49).

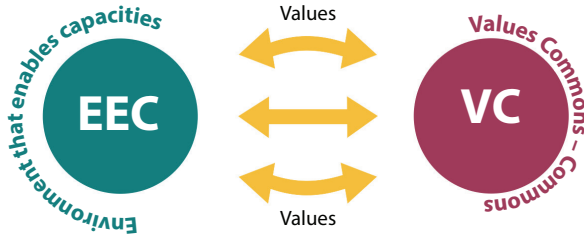
We live in a world that changes rapidly and is increasingly interdependent, where knowledge and innovation are important engines for development. This means that good learning and good quality education are increasingly decisive in the well-being of individuals, in the progress of countries, and in the quality of the common future of humanity. (UNESCO, 2014, p. 9)

With this purpose in mind, continuous education allows people to adapt to new realities and to develop training processes that respond to social needs and demands, thus contributing to the progress and development of citizens. Therefore, since education is an integral (holistic) process, it allows the empowerment of human beings through formative processes that promote critical thinking and transcendence in order to forge their own future (De Natale, 2017). In this sense, higher education plays a fundamental role and should encourage practical, collaborative –communal– learning, based on the management of projects and activities that enhance the development of skills and abilities (Alessandrini, 2014). Nussbaum identifies the following types of capabilities:

- “Internal capabilities”: relate to the emotional, intellectual part, the state of health that develops within the wider context –family, social, political, cultural– in which a person lives. These allow the *functioning*.
- “Combined capabilities”: the combination of internal capabilities and the external environment, in which the person can develop fully as their internal capabilities become visible, if external conditions [environments] allow it.
- “Basic capabilities”: are the innate abilities of each person that cannot be acquired but can be enhanced. The environment helps the acquisition of internal capabilities (2012, pp. 28-31).

Illustration 1

Values at the Salesian Polytechnic University. Common Pool Resources

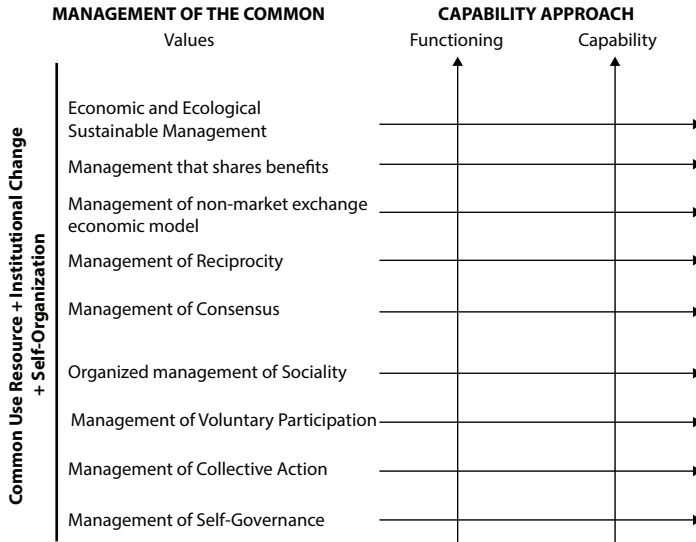


Source: Authors's elaboration

The development of these capacities is the direct result of a supportive environment. For this reason the learning context is an important factor, because it must be able to transform and generate action. Indeed, the context influences human development and education must be oriented towards generating “environments that give value to mutual respect, security, attentive listening and the mutual and genuine willingness to welcome and accept differences ... (and) create opportunities of experiential learning” in formal and informal contexts, inside and outside the classroom (Ellerani, 2017, p. 182).

From the perspective of the common good, the values generated are the result of the interactions of the commune's members in different environments. This is where the individual commitment to contribute to the sustainability of the common pool resource is born under the logic of appropriation-provision. The management of the common (Illustration 2) is possible in environments where, through the approach- functioning capability/actions and capabilities- members can act freely, enhance their capabilities and contribute to the management of commonly used resources, being co-participants and correspondents of the process.

Illustration 2 Management values and the capability approach⁷



Source: Nussbaum, 2001; Ostrom, 2011

The Salesian education: the environment-oratorio⁸

Under the premises established in the previous section, “education (...) is affirmed as the right of man in this new educational perspective that implies a continuous relationship of man in himself,

7 The topic of the management of the common is developed in the first article of this book, “The university: a commune of citizens”.

8 **Translator’s Note** - Don Bosco, the founding father of the catholic Salesian order, established the *oratorio*, that is to say a *catechism*. It was a place for marginal and neglected young people who had been abandoned to their own destiny. In such a place, the Salesian fathers created a sense of family where such youth were welcomed, looked after, and educated. It was a place of prayer, education, play, and togetherness.

of man with society” (De Natale, 2017, p. 85), contributing to a full human development, focused on the person and their ability to be active actors at the service of Society and not the market. That is why the University must point to an education where co-constructed knowledge is generated from cooperation, participation and learning, in an environment that enhances the capacities of all actors in the academic community.

Every work of Salesian education is based on the experience of Don Bosco and the Salesian *oratorio* is one of the most important legacies. The Salesian mission is to form good Christians and honest citizens, the search for wisdom and knowledge, the encounter and transcendence of the person. The *oratorio* is not necessarily a physical space, but rather an experience that:

facilitates the family atmosphere, establishes the necessary mediations so that every young person grows up in a cosy and familiar environment (home), marked by joy (*patio*); where they can develop all their potential, acquiring new skills (school) and walk following a clear proposal of faith (parish/Church). (Dicastery of Youth Ministry, 2014, p. 127)⁹

According to Salesian pedagogy, it is important that the educator knows the context and reality of young people. They must be empathetic and create a climate of affection, hope, accompaniment; their work is inside and outside the classroom. For these reasons, Don Bosco’s pedagogy is known as the Preventive System, because it integrates the person in an integral way, cares for the human and takes into account the context where education is being carried out (Ávila, 2013).

The *oratorio* is understood as a meeting place, which goes beyond the educational-pastoral dimension; it is a youth experience

9 **Translator’s Note** - From the Greek term δικαστήριον, law-court, from δικαστής, judge/juror, a **dicastery** is a department of the Roman Curia, the administration of the Holy See through which the pope directs the Roman Catholic Church.

that, through pedagogy, spirituality and the associationism, aims to combine the affective and educational aspects to arrives at the person's soul who feels welcome and finds the meaning of their life (Dicastery of Youth Pastoral, 2014). It goes beyond a physical space - as in the commune; it is a life experience, a meeting place, a space of accompaniment where young people can develop their capacities to become architects of their life projects. It is a place where opportunities, activities, environments are provided; it is a space, of accompaniment, encounter, support. It is a community called to service and where its members can develop fully and freely (Peraza, 2011). Those who are part of an *oratorio* are committed to work for the person under the principle of co-responsibility, which is related to the shared responsibility when managing the common pool resource.

In this sense, Salesian pedagogy is committed to human development through its person-centered work, the creation of oratories (Peraza, 2011) –spaces that enhance capacities– a pedagogy provides young people with tools to become managers of their life project and key actors in the construction of the common good.

The UPS-Commune

The Polytechnic Salesian University (UPS) is interested in promoting higher education as a common pool resource, in order to enrich the members of the university community and of Society in general, in a communal environment that enhances the *capacity/action*.¹⁰ It is not only about monetary wealth, but also about the value of people, their life project and their human development implicit in this process, since both aspects are interdependent and important in people's lives.

10 **Translator's Note** – Expression that plays with the Spanish word *capacitación* (training), literally meaning “providing capacities/enabling”; it refers to an action that enables, from the Spanish terms for *capacities* and *action*. Cf. footnote 7.

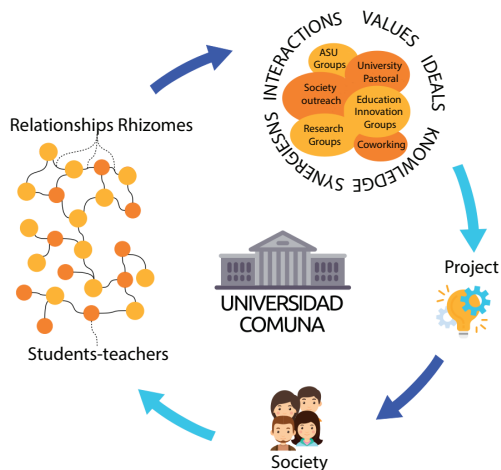
The UPS, working on its mission of “(...) training honest citizens and good Christians, with academic and research capacity that contribute to local and national sustainable development” (UPS, nd) has encouraged the creation of various environments that contribute to educate from a person-centred approach and through capacity acquisition. This environment enhances capacities, generates conditions and opportunities to achieve individual and collective aims towards the common good (Salgado, 2018).

These environments are closely related to the communes because all the members of the community –students, educators, administrators– appropriate the goods and services of the ecosystem-university, but also give back to guarantee the sustainability of this common pool resource. For this reason, the Salesian University encourages associationism as a key axis in education, as it encourages group work to grow in community.

[University] entrepreneurs are considered agents of change and growth; they disseminate innovative ideas constantly, accelerating the process of transformation and improvement of their environment (OECD, 2016). In this way, innovative projects generate economic growth in their communities by creating new businesses and contributing to local development (Henderson, 2002), thus contributing to the common good.

As a Salesian institution, the UPS has several communal environments that allow members of the university community to associate and strengthen their capabilities. In this way, there is interrelation and synergy –in the form of rhizomes– between all the agendas and university programs, in which the project acts as a catalyst axis and becomes the link with Society (illustration 3).

Illustration 3 The Commune University and the environment that enhances capabilities



Source: Authors' elaboration

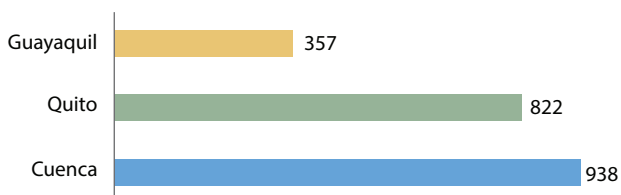
Participation in the different university environments and spaces is voluntary, consensual and through action. The community members are agents of their own future thus, they can freely take their life project in formal and informal spaces where, through entrepreneurship and innovation, inside and outside of the community-college positive changes is generated.

ASU groups

The Salesian University Association (ASU) relies on the participation of students, teachers and beneficiaries outside the university. It seeks to integrate together undergraduate degrees, areas of 'Linking with Society', 'University Pastoral', and 'Reason and Faith' in one project "of human development in vulnerable communities -

missions” (UPS, 2018d). During 2017, it reached 18,756 beneficiaries and in 2018, 2117 students and animators participated in the three university venues - Quito Guayaquil and Cuenca.

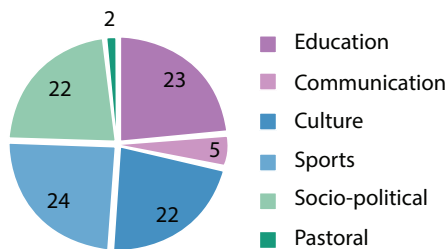
Illustration 4
Student participation by location year 2018



Source: (UPS, 2018d). Authors' elaboration

ASU groups are an essential element of the UPS university life. They are approved by the Higher Committee and must comply with the set requirements and procedures. Their main objective is to be a place of youth expression in the Salesian style, based on participation, commitment and vocation in the following areas: culture, sports, communication, education, socio-political, and pastoral (UPS, 2018a).

Illustration 5
National ASU Groups by area



Source: UPS, 2018c. Authors' elaboration

In this environment, through various social activities, members can put into practice what they learn. The individual experience inspires other students to become a part of the ASU groups, and so the community grows. This meeting space offers a number of opportunities, which in addition to strengthening capacities and creating internal and external networks also allows students to discover new skills and abilities.

The ASU groups allow complementing personal development and motivates students to develop in different areas, fulfilling objectives that are the result of collective actions, commitment and reciprocal relationships within each group, with other groups and with the rest of the university. In this space, students experience a real growth in community because coexistence strengthens the values that are interwoven as a result of their actions (functioning) and the empowerment of their abilities (capability).

University Pastoral

The University Pastoral aims to sensitize the university community about the Salesian role in education, promoting academic excellence, respect for diversity and building a more equitable society. It grounds its work on four pedagogical elements: community environment; cultural mediation; commitment and involvement with cultural, social and ecclesial realities; and personal and group support (UPS, 2018c).

One of the most important initiatives within the Pastoral area is the 'Accompaniment Project' for fellows and non-fellows, according to the specific Salesian style. Its main objective is to provide an accompaniment to new students, with the aim of reducing dropout rates, dropouts and/or re-taking of degree subjects. The project is carried out through two strategies (table 1); the first one is 'peer tutoring', led by the GIATAE Research Group; the second one through the Listening and Accompaniment Centre, directed by the 'Reason and Faith' area of knowledge. A total of 2,718 students benefit from these initiatives (UPS, 2017a).

Table 1
Project of Accompaniment, Salesian Style (2017)

Dimension	Academic	Human
Strategy	Peer tutoring	Centre for Listening and Accompaniment
No. of beneficiary students	1458	1260

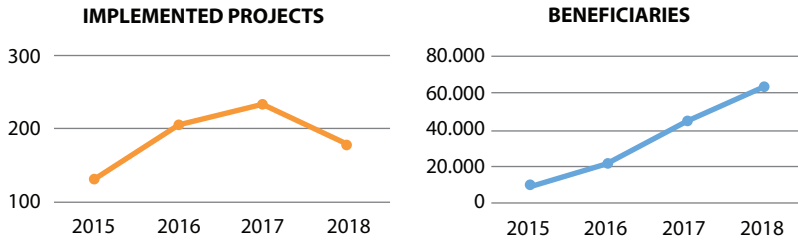
Source (UPS, 2017a). Authors' elaboration

Outreach work (links with Society)

The relationship with Society is a fundamental axis in the actions of the UPS, because together with teaching, research and administrative management, they must aligned with the National Plan for Good Living and contribute to the development of the country. Aware of the university's social responsibilities, the UPS is committed to contributing to Society through programs, projects and activities that contribute positively to different environments, especially the more vulnerable ones (UPS, 2018f).

Work is undertaken in three lines of intervention: academic linkage, organizational strengthening, and development management. Each one has bespoke processes and programs. In 2018, 177 projects were completed with the participation of 1,249 students with a total of 62,847 beneficiaries (illustration 4). Although fewer projects were completed than in 2017, they were more complex and total number of beneficiaries increased (Technical Secretariat of Society Links, 2019).

Illustration 6 Historical Links with Society



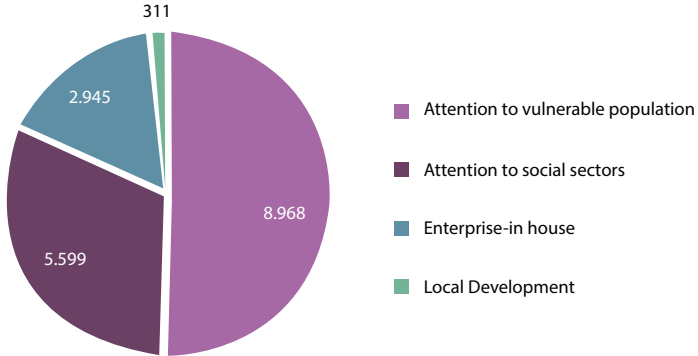
Source: (Technical secretary for Society Links, 2019). Authors' elaboration

Currently, there are 25 programs in three locations; the ones with the greatest impact in terms of number of beneficiaries are (illustration 7): attention to vulnerable populations; attention to social sectors; entrepreneurial-in-house¹¹ and local development (UPS, 2017b). In this way, the members of the university community are linked to their environment and needs, and generates positive impacts and an increasingly supportive society.

The relationship with Society allows members of the commune-university to experience life in a way that complement their university education and makes them more sensitive to the reality of the environment in which they develop. In this way, students seek to participate in this space as part of their commitment to the common good and the community, as their voluntary and committed participation allows the benefits to be shared with actors outside the University.

11 *Entrepreneurial-in-house* is a modality of continuing education for adults through courses that are carried out in partnership with a number of companies external to the UPS. The objective is to provide a training space through face-to-face and virtual spaces along with field practices.

Illustration 7
Number of beneficiaries of the four
'Link with Society' programmes



Source: UPS, 2019. Authors' elaboration

Educational Innovation Groups

In its search to promote educational strategies to improve the quality of education, the UPS has motivated the creation of Educational Innovation Groups (GIE) that are set up to enhance current teaching through new pedagogical and methodological strategies to be disseminated and applied in the university community. The work of teachers seeks new ways to disseminate knowledge, that offers students new learning paths that contribute to their self-development (UPS, 2018b).

In this way, the GIE become a space where teachers, students and administrative staff contribute to the construction of a university-commune. Currently, the UPS has seven innovation themes (cf. illustration 8), 15 Educational Innovation Groups, and 6 innovation projects that seek, to strengthen academic quality within the University (Vice-Rectorate for Teaching, 2018).

Illustration 8 Educational Innovation Lines



Source: Vice-Rectorate for Teachers, 2018. Authors' own elaboration

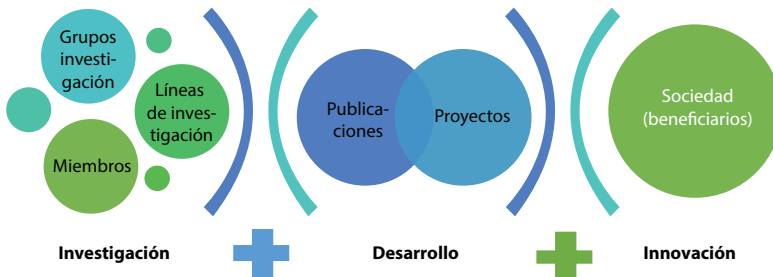
This initiative was proposed, not imposed, by the academic community in its commitment to contribute to the improvement and for development of the commune-university, in order to achieve better learning outcomes and encourage innovation in teachers. The new methodologies, proposals and evaluation processes contribute to an environment that enhances capacities and generates new forms of learning students, which is the centre of all actions. Thus, collectively members contribute to the sustainability of the common pool resource.

Research Groups

Research Groups (GI) provide an academic space that seeks the generation of knowledge based on scientific research, technological development, and innovation. They are based on the interest and values of teachers and students who joined efforts to develop innovative projects aimed at the production of pertinent, relevant and transformative knowledge –that meets social demands, and makes a positive contribution to the environment (Salgado, 2018).

The research projects bring together inter and trans disciplinary groups that, together with students, develop research in various areas; work autonomously and contribute useful knowledge to social needs and demands (Salgado, 2018). Currently, the UPS has 39 lines of research; 73 research groups; more than 406 teachers, researchers, and technical staff; 1068 students; and 132 projects (UPS, 2018e).

Illustration 9
UPS Research



Source: UPS, 2017b. Authors' own elaboration

This space encourages collaborative learning and motivates students to investigate, adding value to the university and the wider environment. Within the groups, internal dynamics (self-organization) are also generated so that the resources they have, which are from and for the university, are sustainable and allow them to continue generating contributions for the commune.

Co-working/StartUPS

The Co-working/StartUPS project emerged in 2015 as a joint project between the Salesian Polytechnic University, the Polytechnic University of Madrid (UPM) and other external entities. It takes a project-based learning approach and throughout the academic year various activities aim to develop useful learning tools to enable stu-

dents to develop themselves and their projects in “freedom of action of self-organization” (Salgado, 2018, p. 418).

The UPS has four physical co-working spaces in the cities of Cuenca, Guayaquil, Quito-Campus Girón, and Quito-Campus Sur. This collaborative seeks to promote entrepreneurship, and combines important elements of innovation, awareness, and capacity development. It is open to all; a place where its members feel welcomed and supported; where people, ideas, and projects are interconnected, and its members are the main agents of their own training process (Salgado, 2018).

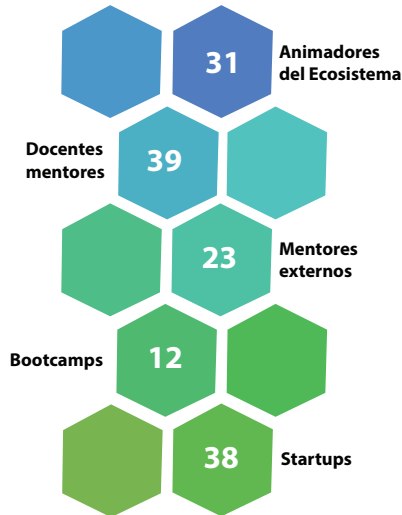
Our aim is that innovative students receive mentoring in all the different events that are carried out, to convert theory into practice. Meetings, courses, workshops, hackatons,¹² and BootCamps¹³ are organized, employing various methods: (i) Working with people, (ii) Project-based learning, (iii) Happy Canvas School, (iv) Scrum (Scrum, 2018), (v) Resilience Camaleon, and (vi) Idea, Design, Prototype, Validation (Máytás, Carpio, Soriano, & Carrera, 2018).

Since its start, the Coworking/StartUPS space has brought together approximately 17,128 students and conducted 2,136 workshops

12 The *Hackaton* is a space that brings together multidisciplinary teams that work for 48 hours to solve a specific challenge posed by an organization outside the UPS (public or private). The objective is to generate alliances with companies to solve specific and real problems, in this way the university-company-society alliance is strengthened.

13 The UPS calls *BootCamps* to various camps that have a specific methodology for each event. It is a space for speed learning that seeks the transfer of various tools to drive innovation and that help students develop business skills. Each year students develop the BootCamp called “reCREATE” in each headquarters; a national BootCamp called “rETHOS”, and several mini BootCamps in each headquarters. **Translator’s Note** – The names of the bootcamps play on words: *reCREATE* plays on the Spanish words *recrearse* (to enjoy) and *create* (to create); *rETHOS* is a term formed by the union of the Spanish words *Retos* (challenges) and *Ethos* (ethos).

on different topics, contributing to creating an environment that enhances the capacities of the actors of the university community.



The Co-working/StartUPS project has redefined the Salesian *oratorio*; it provides an opportunity for community-building, creating networks, and has become a meeting place for work, sharing, support and growth. Entrepreneurship is a didactic tool that allows generation of non-commercial exchanges, since the co-working spirit of young people enables the revaluation of the sense of a common space and the co-construction of collective development.

Competitions between the UPS and the young university comuneros

What does a “traditional” student look for when entering university? What role does the university play in “professionalizing” development during students’ academic careers? What makes the university a communal “environment” for the development of people?

How do we all intervene –teachers and students– to build, on the basis of our community, capacities that give us a unique identity? These are the main questions that arise when considering the role of the university-commune, in which as beneficiaries many of us play a part,¹⁴ each with a different vision and objectives. Some possible answers to these questions are: it is only through obtaining a degree; attaining a certain number of graduates per year; being awarded a medal as a new professional graduate –who are expected to contribute to society through developing complementary competences and skills– that can create socially responsible and innovative actions in relation to our spaces of social interaction.

Through the globalization of our society, and continual updating of “information” that may be responsibly or irresponsibly posted on social networks, obtaining an academic degree is no longer fashionable. A degree is also no longer the only pre-requisite that institutions seek from possible employees, or that individuals require to practice a profession. It is even worse in the case of perfect academic records. We live in an era where specialization –master’s degree– is the “minimum” professional requisite. In the hope that this will change (it is already started to happen), many of these elements are losing their “power” as far as professional development is concerned. Not only is the “market” for professionals manifesting a change in the requisites demanded, but many universities have listened to their beneficiaries and seek to deliver to society individuals with different ways of performing a professional role. Here, we are talking about skills and abilities that young people must develop during their academic experience at university.

According to Sen, being or doing is the way in which human beings respond to the alternatives in front of them. This principle is

14 The term *stakeholders* is also used to refer to beneficiaries.

close to the capability approach to human experience according to which, as human beings, we are required to take decisions and make choices at every moment in our lives (Gough, 2007, p. 189). Here, we must begin with cooperation and reciprocity to others, since our decisions must support collective –common– well-being. That is to say, we can either be or do, and we can achieve it by our actions (capacities/functions) (Robeyns, 2017, p. 9). That is, the process of knowing our capacities and what they can achieve. It is also important to understand that in combination one or more skills can appear.

Hager, Holland and Becker (2002, p. 3) offer an interesting approach by defining competencies as a range of qualities, be them specific, technical or generic. A classification of competences can be: (i) basic or instrumental, focused on solving everyday problems that we acquire in basic training; (ii) generic, transversal, intermediate, emphasizing skills and broad transversal attitudes to different professional fields; (iii) specific, technical or specialized, with technical elements focused on a specific area of study, which are not easily transferred to academic or work contexts; and, (iv) meta-competences that are generic but of a high level and favour the development of other competences (García-San Pedro, 2009, p. 15).

In the university context, many competencies develop through a curriculum which is designed to help students complete their studies and gain competencies that increase their professional profile. For example, the Spanish National Agency for Quality Assessment and Accreditation (ANECA), lists a large number of competencies that must be implicit in a curriculum. The generic transversal competences proposed by this agency are:

Table 2
ANECA Competencies

A. INSTRUMENTAL
Capacity for analysis and synthesis
Organization and planning capacity
Oral and written communication skills in the native language
Proficiency in a foreign language
Computer skills related to the field of study
Ability to manage information
Problem solution
Decision making
B. PERSONAL
Teamwork
Ability to work in an interdisciplinary team
Ability to work in an international context
Skills in interpersonal relationships
Respect for diversity and multiculturalism
Critical thinking
Ethical commitment
C. SYSTEMS
Autonomous Learning
Adaptation to new situations
Creativity
Leadership
Knowledge of other cultures and customs
Initiative and entrepreneurial spirit
Motivation for quality
Sensitivity to environmental issues

Source: ANECA / (Van-der Hofstadt Roman & Gras, 2006)

At first glance, these competences seem logical and necessary –basic– so that a student can use them in their professional practice, but these won't be distinctive from other graduates from other universities. That is why as a university, we consider it necessary to define skills that will make our students stand out. To not only satisfy the academic ego in Higher Education, but also for the satisfaction of providing each student in our community with elements –competences– that will help both their professional development and to achieve their life goal. So, it is important to define the actions that each of the parties –university and student– must contribute to the generation of these competences.

Below is a table listing the possible contributions of the UPS (as an environment that enhances capacities) and its students (as their main users). The result of this combination promotes a community link that generates action values for the resource of common use.

From the above table it is evident that (as an empowering environment), the university plays the role of developing capacities that, through integration, knowledge, action, autonomous performance, and good practice, aim to consolidate “comprehensive training”. For this environment to function the commune is needed, that we understand to be a space of reciprocity and correspondence where results are obtained that will benefit the whole of society. It is not only based on a theoretical academic argument or according to the “needs” of an unknown and changing market, for example ANECA. Instead, it creates a process of involuntary obligation that guarantees the functioning of the commune, which in turn will better manage the common resources.

Table 3
Skills for the Commune: University and Students

University	Student(s)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educate and train • Open space for lifelong learning • Disseminate knowledge through research • Understand, reinforce, encourage and disseminate national, regional, and historical cultures • Protect and consolidate societies values • Promote knowledge through research in the fields of the Arts and Humanities, and Science, and the dissemination of their results • Critical and creative thinking • Quality evaluation • Correct management and financing • Sharing of theoretical and practical knowledge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis and synthesis • Apply knowledge in practice • Planning and time management • Research skills • Ability to learn • Information management skills • Criticism and self-criticism • Adapt to new situations • Creativity • Set and solve problems • Decision making • Lead work team • Inter-personal skills • Leadership • Ethical commitment • Entrepreneurship • Achievement motivation • Commitment to citizenship • Social commitment • Humanistic attitude • Social responsibility • Service vocation • Tolerance • Competitiveness • Predisposition • Learn from failures • Vocation of service and solidarity • Ability to manage resources • Negotiation capacity • Commitment to the community • Ability to be an agent of change • Environmental commitment

Source: World Declaration on Higher Education in the 21st century (UNESCO, 1998); Competencies Report; TUNING Latin America Project (2007).

Within the functioning of the commune, it is understood that the use of the common is an obligation that everyone accepts voluntarily to achieve reciprocal relations. This also means that the organisation delegates certain functions to each individual so as not to harm the other members of the commune. Herein lies the principle

of co-responsibility to develop greater competencies that are not delegated but are developed by each individual, and that have a place once they are put into practice in the commune. This premise underpins Ostrom's work on collective action that can fulfil common interests, drawing on their own resources and the common interests of a sector (2011). To use the commune as a model that supports the achievement of the common, translates the idea of a series of relationships that are capable of developing non-personal and reciprocal actions for individuals in the commune. It could be synthesized as:

$$\text{value for the commune} = \frac{\text{what I have}}{\text{what i give}} - \text{Community control system}$$

Conclusion

An educational space such as the University allows us to reclaim the sense of commune, because in it we can interweave a number of relationships that are based on the co-construction of a new educational model in favour of the common good. The latter bases its management on the communal, cooperative, democratic, equal, and on the logic of self-government through the freedom of action of the community members.

The freedom of action and decision enjoyed by the members of the university-community motivates them to actively participate in various initiatives that are beneficial to the community; while at the same time enhancing their own capacities and allowing them to develop their individual life projects. This commune is not only an educational/academic space; it is also an experimental and experiential opportunity for transcendence, which will allow all its members to forge their own future.

Like the commune, the UPS is a place of encounter, coexistence and learning that highlights and enhances the value of its community

members, so that in different environments, these members clearly display a “Salesian style” and can grow as a community working together to manage the university as a common pool resource. Some of these environments have already been mentioned, for example: the ASU Groups and the University Pastoral through the Salesian university associations; student involvement in outreach projects; groups for educational and research innovation; and the new Co-working/StartUPS innovation and entrepreneurship ecosystem.

The voluntary participation of students in the different environments, and the consolidation of a collective action indicate that a first stage has been reached in the process of empowering the common pool resource. Through consensus, this can achieve an institutional change that will allow the commune to achieve self-organization under the principles of reciprocity, collective action, commitment and co-construction to contribute to the sustainability of the university – both as a commune and evaluator of the communal system.

In the present work, we have approached the capability approach not so much through the competences that students have to obtain and that the teachers have to develop in them, but from the perspective of an environment that strengthens their capacities. Here, the university meets its main users, the students. Whether from the university or from the students’ side, these competences will be managed through the integration of individual autonomous performances, which guarantees that they are put into practice through the daily workings of the commune.

The management of the university-commune under this perspective generates ownership by the members of the community who are committed to contributing to this common pool resource, and in different ways contribute to guaranteeing its sustainability. It puts aside the value of meritocracy that characterizes the traditional

university, because it affects any “extra” effort that a commoner can make to achieve “excellence”.

This person-centred education has as its fundamental tools innovation and entrepreneurship, which makes the University a living learning laboratory, since they allow the community members to develop freely but responsibly in the different university environments. It promotes not only the development of their abilities, but their ability to adapt in the pursuit of their life projects through entrepreneurship, which allows them to become agents of change and growth, with a new vision that considers the common good as the fundamental line in its commitment to contribute to the development of its environment.

Bibliography

- Alessandrini, G. (2014). *La ‘pedagogia’ di Martha Nussbaum. Approccio alle capacità e sfide educative* (1a ed.). Milano: Franco Angeli.
- (2017). Generar capacidades: educación y justicia social. En *El enfoque de las capacidades: ¿Una teoría pedagógica?* (pp. 19-46). Quito: Abya-Yala.
- Alkire, S., & Deneulin, S. (2009). The Human Development and Capability Approach. En S. Deneulin & L. Shahani (Eds.), *An Introduction to the Human Development and Capability Approach* (p. 377). Londres: Earthscan.
- Ávila, S. B. fma. (2013). El oratorio de Don Bosco. En *Congreso Nacional Pedagogía de Don Bosco* (pp. 261-268). Cuenca: Abya-Yala.
- Azzellini, D. (2017). Construyendo utopías concretas: el movimiento comunitario en Venezuela. *Convergencia Revista de Ciencias Sociales*, (76), 191-214. <https://doi.org/10.29101/crcs.v25i76.4664>
- Cameron, R., & Neal, L. (2015). *Historia económica mundial* (4th ed.). Madrid: Alianza Editorial.
- Cejudo, R. (2006). Desarrollo humano y capacidades. Aplicaciones de la teoría de las capacidades de Amartya Sen a la educación. *Revista Española de Pedagogía*, 64(234), 365-380.

- De Natale, M. L. (2017). Educación permanente y democracia: El aporte de Martha Nussbaum. En *El enfoque de las capacidades: ¿Una teoría pedagógica?* (pp. 77-106). Quito: Abya-Yala.
- Dicasterio de Pastoral Juvenil. (2014). *La Pastoral Juvenil Salesiana* (3rd ed.). Cuenca: Editorial Don Bosco-Centro Gráfico Salesiano.
- Ellerani, P. (2017). Las oportunidades de aprendizaje en la formación superior: Perspectivas Internacionales según el enfoque de Martha Nussbaum (pp. 155-196). Quito: Abya-Yala.
- Felber, C. (2012). *La economía del bien común* (10th ed.). Barcelona: Deusto S.A Ediciones.
- García-San Pedro, M. J. (2009). El concepto de competencias y su adopción en el contexto universitario. *Revista Alternativas*, 16, 11-28.
- Gómez-Álvarez Díaz, R., Morales Sánchez, R., & Rodríguez Morilla, C. (2017). La Economía del Bien Común en el ámbito local. *CIRIEC-España, Revista de Economía Pública, Social y Cooperativa*, (90), 189. <https://doi.org/10.7203/CIRIEC-E.90.8898>
- Gough, I. (2007). El enfoque de las capacidades de M. Nussbaum: un análisis comparado con nuestra teoría de las necesidades humanas. *Papeles de Relaciones Ecosociales y Cambio Global*, 100(100), 177-202. Obtenido de <http://www.fuhem.es/ecosocial/>
- Hager, P., Holland, S., & Beckett, D. (2002). Enhancing the learning and employability of graduates: the role of generic skills. Melbourne: Business/Higher Education Round Table (Australia) (B-HERT). Obtenido de <http://hdl.voced.edu.au/10707/108724>.
- Henderson, J. (2002). Building the Rural Economy With High-Growth Entrepreneurs. *Economic Review - Federal Reserve Bank Of Kansas Cit*, 87(3), 45-70.
- Margiotta, U. (2017). Habilidades, capacitación y formación: Después del Welfare. En G. Alessandrini (Ed.), *El enfoque de las capacidades: ¿Una teoría pedagógica?* (pp. 47-76). Quito: Abya-Yala.
- Máytas, B., Carpio, M. I., Soriano, B., & Carrera, P. (2018). A Brief Review on Startup Mentoring in Higher Education in Ecuador. *Journal of Entrepreneurship Education*, 21(2), 1-5.
- Nussbaum, M. (2001). *Women and human development: {The} capabilities approach* (Vol. 3). Cambridge University Press.

- _____. (2012). *Creare capacità: liberarsi dalla dittatura del Pil*. Bologna: Il Mulino.
- Nussbaum, M., & Sen, A. (2009). *The Quality of Life*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- OECD. (2016). *Entrepreneurship at a Glance 2016*. Paris: OECD Publishing.
- Ostrom, E. (2011). *El gobierno de los bienes comunes: la evolución de las instituciones de acción colectiva* (2da ed.). México D.F.: Fondo de Cultura Económica.
- Ozgem, E., & Minsky, B. D. (2007). Opportunity recognition in rural entrepreneurship in developing countries. *International Journal Of Entrepreneurship*, 11, 49-73.
- Peraza, F. (2011). *Acompañamiento y paternidad espiritual en San Juan Bosco*. Quito: Editorial CCS.
- Proyecto Tunning (2007). *Informe de competencias proyecto TUNING América Latina*. Bilbao.
- Ramis, Á. (2013). El concepto de bienes comunes en la obra de Elinor Ostrom. *Ecología Política: Cuadernos de Debate Internacional*, (45), 116-121. Obtenido de <https://bit.ly/2vNSIpy>
- Robeyns, I. (2017). *Wellbeing, Freedom and Social Justice: The Capability Approach Re-Examined*. *Wellbeing, Freedom and Social* (1era ed.). Cambridge: OpenBook Publishers. <https://doi.org/http://dx.doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0130>
- Salgado, J. P. (2018). *Innovación organizativa para la puesta en valor de la investigación científica. El caso de la Universidad Politécnica Salesiana*. Università degli Studi di Ferrara.
- Salgado, J. P., De los Ríos, I., & López, M. (2017). Management of Entrepreneurship Projects from Project-Based Learning: Coworking StartUPS Project at Universidad Politécnica Salesiana (Salesian Polytechnic University), Ecuador. *INTECH*. <https://doi.org/10.5772/intechopen.68492>
- Secretaría Técnica de Vinculación con la Sociedad. (2019). *Informe de Ejecución de actividades periodo 2018*. Cuenca.
- Sen, A. (2009). Capability: Reach and Limit. In *Global Society: Reach and Limits of the Capability Approach* (pp. 15-28). Milan: Fondazione Giangiacomo Feltrinelli.

- Stiglitz, J. E., Sen, A., & Fitoussi, J.P. (2008). *Informe de la Comisión sobre la Medición del Desarrollo Económico y del Progreso Social*. París. Obtenido de www.stiglitz-sen-fitoussi.fr
- UNESCO. (1998). Declaración Mundial sobre la Educación Superior en el siglo XXI. París: UNESCO. Obtenido de <https://bit.ly/2Ja6oUy>
- _____. (2014). *Estrategia de educación de la UNESCO 2014-2021*. París. Obtenido de <https://bit.ly/2J9R8a8>
- UPS. (n.d.). *Razón de Ser*. Cuenca. Obtenido de <https://bit.ly/2Lxp4PR>
- _____. (2017a). *Rendición de cuentas - Ejecución Plan Operativo 2017. Informe del Rector 2017*. Quito.
- _____. (2017b). *UPS en cifras e indicadores de gestión. Informe del Rector 2017*. Quito.
- _____. (2018a). Grupos ASU. Obtenido de <https://bit.ly/2VpIWJs>
- _____. (2018b). Innovación Educativa. Obtenido de <https://bit.ly/2vMYzeQ>
- _____. (2018c). Pastoral Universitaria.
- _____. (2018d). *Rendición de cuentas. Ejecución del Plan Operativo Anual. Informe del Rector 2018*. Quito.
- UPS. (2018e). *Resultados de Investigación, Innovación y Publicaciones*. Quito: Abya-Yala.
- _____. (2018f). Vinculación con la Sociedad. Obtenido de <https://bit.ly/2H7bZHD>
- Van-der Hofstadt Roman, C., & Gras, J. M. (2006). *Competencias y habilidades profesionales para universitarios*. Madrid: Ediciones Díaz de Santos S.A.
- Vicerrectorado Docente. (2018). *Grupos de Innovación Educativa (GIE)*. Cuenca.