

WE VALUE

CASE STUDY



Guanajuato University, Mexico

Background

The Environmental Institutional Programme of Guanajuato University (PIMAUG) is a cross-faculty initiative structured around 6 strategic areas:

- a) Assisting students to develop a holistic vision of the environment.
- b) Promoting sustainable resource use and waste management.
- c) Diffusion of a culture of environmental awareness, through a variety of media.
- d) Interdisciplinary research.
- e) Training in environmental issues through diplomas and Masters programmes.
- f) Social participation and inter-institutional partnership.

The work of PIMAUG is heavily informed by the Earth Charter Initiative, a founding partner of the ESDInds (Education for Sustainable Development indicators) Project Consortium, which created WeValue. In particular, PIMAUG has a peer education programme in which Guanajuato University students train to deliver workshops inspired by the Earth Charter. This was the setting for the first trial of the indicators.

Discussing and Measuring the Indicators

The ESDInds research team's field visit to Guanajuato concentrated on the validation of a wide range of indicators, in terms of their relevance, and the preparatory work for a system of continuous evaluation across the work of PIMAUG using the draft indicators.

Ten indicators were measured during the four-hour Earth Charter workshop, proving that the WeValue process does not have to be time-consuming and that even a very rapid assessment can often be helpful (depending on the objectives).

To measure these indicators, PIMAUG staff (in close collaboration with a researcher from the WeValue team) used a mixture of different methods. Many of these were inspired by the creative ways of measuring that had been developed at Echeri.

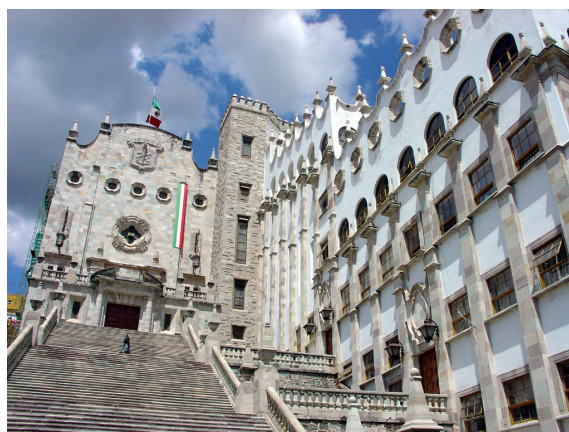
Evidence based on what people think and feel

Vote with your Feet (spatial survey): Participants in the workshop were asked to stand in a line and after each question, step to the left to answer 'A little', stay in their place to answer 'Sometimes', or step to the right to answer 'A lot'.

Posture Vote (corporal survey): Participants were asked to use different body postures (e.g. cross arms, hands on hips, flex biceps; sit on the floor, stand still, raise arms) to represent different answers to questions. The chosen postures reflected the question, e.g. 'flex your biceps if you feel very empowered'.

Focus Group: This was used to complement the spatial survey, focusing on the reasons for participants' responses and exploring the reasons for different levels of empowerment.

What/Why Grid (word elicitation): Participants were asked to write down three emotions ('What?') that the workshop had stirred in them, together with a sentence of explanation ('Why?').



Key Informant Interviews: In-depth interviews with the project coordinator and a youth promoter were used to supplement the information obtained through other methods.

Evidence based on what people do and say during their day-to-day activities

Semi-Structured Observation: Two ESDinds researchers observed a workshop in progress without participating in it, and then compared observations. The observation is described as 'semi-structured' because the researchers made general notes, guided by broad themes (the selected indicators) rather than ticking boxes a structured assessment sheet.

Evidence based on things that can be seen, counted or measured

Personal Action Plans: Workshop participants were asked to write down four goals. By looking at the action plans, PIMAUG staff and ESDinds researchers gained an insight into the motivation and commitment generated by the training, and helped them to identify the participants' personal priorities and values.

Benefits of the WeValue Process for Guanajuato

- The PIMAUG team members found the concept of measuring values-based indicators highly relevant to their work. The very act of reflecting on the indicators - even before the actual measurement - allowed them to envisage **new connections** between their current activities, potential **new areas of work** that could be developed, and **strategic decisions** that they would like to take.
- The results of the assessment were useful to PIMAUG in helping them to **understand the efficacy of their workshops**, identifying the factors involved in genuine empowerment, and providing important insights into how motivation can be translated into effective action.
- **Facilitators liked the creative research methods** (e.g. the 'Vote with your Feet' spatial survey and 'Posture Vote' corporal survey) said that they would use them in future workshops, both in the context of the WeValue indicators, and for other surveys and evaluation exercises.