

# Todos Santos Community Assessment, June-July 2015

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In opening an education and research center in Todos Santos, Baja California Sur, Mexico, Colorado State University is making a long-term commitment to the community and the region. Central to CSU's longevity and success in Todos Santos is developing partnerships with community members and regional institutions that are built on mutual respect, trust and accountability. This ongoing process of relationship building, in which we seek to understand each other's cultures, priorities, hopes, and challenges, will set the stage for CSU faculty to collaboratively design and implement educational programs and research that are based on shared goals and mutual commitment. This collaboration will not only help provide long-term holistic solutions to community priorities, but will also enrich student and faculty experiences.

To this end, the Todos Santos Center with the help of CSU faculty and students has been developing a participatory community approach to program development in the Todos Santos region which initiated with a community assessment this June.

## COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT CONTRIBUTORS

Todos Santos Center Director McKenzie Campbell, and Vice Provost for Undergraduate Studies Kathleen Pickering wrote the initial proposal for the community assessment to the Vice President for Research. This grant launched the community assessment. To initiate the process, David Bartecchi, Director of Village Earth, provided a three-day training to the Todos Santos team on the history and theory of participatory community-based research as well as implementation and evaluation tools. Dr. Aines Castro and Fabiola Rodriguez contributed as local research assistants by gathering existing baseline data on socio-demographic, environmental and agricultural characteristics of the focus regions from regional government and research institutions as well as participating in informal interviews with community members. Dr. Danielle Straatmann, Director of Veterinary Medicine and Science for the CSU Todos Santos Center; Dr. Andrea Purdy, Professor of Spanish; Cole Purdy, second-year Fish and Wildlife Conservation Biology and Spanish major; Joanie Ellis, third-year Environmental Sociology and Spanish Major; Drew Wilson, CSU Todos Santos Center Public Relations Consultant; and Amy Rex, administrative assistant for the CSU Todos Santos Center also participated in informal community interviews and discussion groups. The above team, together with Kim Kita, Director of Special Projects and Partnerships and project lead, compiled the information included in this report.

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

Outlined below is the Todos Santos Center's proposed process of incorporating community members and regional institutions into educational program and research design. We urge faculty designing educational programs and research proposals in Todos Santos to follow similar methodology.

**1. Listen and Learn:** In June and July, the community assessment team actively engaged with diverse segments of the Todos Santos and El Pescadero communities through informal interviews and discussion groups. The meetings were held with the intention of sharing with the communities what CSU and the CSU Todos Santos Center are and to better understand who the communities are. We heard what residents' current and future priorities are; what they would be interested in learning, teaching and otherwise engaging with at the Center; and any recommendations they have for the CSU Todos Santos Center.

Through this process we talked to more than 150 individuals from the Todos Santos, El Pescadero, and Plutarco Elias Calles communities as well as regional academic and government institutions. Stake holder groups included youth, women's groups, farmers, ranchers, fishermen, ejidatarios, school directors, teachers, elected officials, tourism service providers, individuals interested in environmental topics, and expatriates.

2. **Seek baseline information & explore partnerships:** Concurrently, the team has been collaborating with regional academic, non-profit and governmental agencies to learn what research and educational programs are currently available, as well as gathering baseline data around socio-economic, geographic, environmental, health and agricultural factors. This information can be matched with areas identified by the communities as priorities and utilized to better understand the current situation and guide further collaborative research and educational programming.

3. **Analyze findings:** Analysis of outcomes of the community engagement and collection of baseline data process can be found in this report. Continued discussion around findings will enable CSU, community members and regional institutions to co-create priorities for local workshops, educational programs and research.

4. **Plan and develop:** The results of this study can be used by CSU faculty and the Todos Santos Center to help draft, plan and support program and research development that will unite regional citizens, students, professors, experts, and community leaders with inbound CSU students and faculty.

5. **Implement programs:** Collaboration is an essential element of program implementation. Community partners may be invited to teach as regional experts, learn as interested community members, participate in collective research projects, etc.

6. **Monitor & evaluate:** Monitoring and evaluating CSU's impact, maintaining strong and collaborative partnerships, and adopting a mindset of continuous learning and improvement are essential to the long-term commitment and success in Todos Santos.

## **MISCONCEPTIONS OF THE CSU TODOS SANTOS CENTER**

There are several misconceptions some members of the Todos Santos community hold about the CSU Center. There was, and continues to be, among residents who are not as familiar with the project, the hope that the CSU Center will offer university degrees to local residents. Conversely, there is a widely-held belief that the CSU Center will exclusively serve CSU students. In response to these beliefs, we have communicated that the CSU Center is not a "university," but an educational and research center, open to CSU students and faculty, as well as the regional community for opportunities to learn, teach and exchange ideas.

Some community members express concern about development in the area and are skeptical of a "commercial relationship" between CSU and MIRA. Some question whether CSU is being used to sell real-estate and if CSU will be free to act independently or objectively in-terms of programming and research. CSU is appreciative of the generous land donation by MIRA. CSU upholds research and academic freedom across all of our work and campuses, including the CSU Todos Santos Center, and fully supports our faculty and staff in all academic and research endeavors as they pertain to the Baja California Sur region. Tres Santos and its parent company, MIRA, have also committed to the university that it fully supports research and academic freedom at the center.

## SIGNIFICANT LEARNINGS

Throughout the course of the community discussions, the members of the CSU community assessment team found a number of important themes. These themes and learnings are important to keep in mind as CSU faculty and students look to plan programs and research in the area.

**There is strong community desire to participate with the CSU Center.** Upon hearing that the CSU Center is offering educational opportunities including workshops, courses and lectures for the local community as well as cultural exchanges with CSU students and faculty, the individuals we talked to demonstrated significant interest and eagerness to participate. Community members were interested in both learning and teaching at the CSU Center.

**Community perception of CSU's role in Todos Santos.** CSU's name holds substantial clout in the region. It has great ability to open doors with institutions and individuals. There is hope that the university will use this ability to facilitate collaborations and provide data-driven research which will help the community better understand regional concerns.

In various ways, the community is looking for leaders to catalyze change. Community members have voiced their hope that the CSU Center will be able to bring people together with similar interests and act as objective facilitators to help organize and be part of citizen driven action.

**Creating expectations.** As soon as ideas are mentioned to the community, a sense of hope and expectation is generated. If a concrete direction or outcome is yet to be formed, framing conversations to let people know that you are in an information gathering and brain-storming phase is important to maintaining trust.

**Barriers to change.** Individuals who have attempted to initiate programs in the Todos Santos region often are subjected to local social pressure and criticism. This, combined with creating enough momentum to change the status quo, can be significant barriers to success with creation and maintenance of programs.

## PRIMARY COMMUNITY PRIORITIES

While there is a wide range of hopes and visions for the future by community members, several recurring themes appeared through our conversations with residents, as captured below. (These community themes are not presented in a specific order of priority).

1. Youth engagement
2. Language classes (Especially English)
3. Education system
4. Valuing the environment
  - a. Water
  - b. Waste management
  - c. Mines
5. Public health
6. Sustainable and responsible development
7. Business training and alternative models

The following is a summary of the community assessment team's findings in each of these priorities areas. This information reflects the opinions of the community members who participated in the process, and can be used to help guide future opportunities for program and research development. Several potential opportunities and possible regional partners are presented here. However, it should be noted that this is not an exhaustive list. Additionally, the ideas represented here are not an action plan, and

should not be taken as an expectation of implementation, but rather as a resource for those interested in developing programs and research opportunities.

### **Youth engagement**

A principal theme for many in the community was creating more options for youth (identified as 15-25 year olds), both to engage this age group now, and to help them succeed in the future. Additionally, while the young people we talked to were excited to continue learning and studying, there are several barriers to completing high school and seeking higher education.

The cost of studying can be prohibitively expensive. High school is semi-private and families sometimes struggle to afford the approximate cost of \$4,000 MXN (Mexican pesos) a year. The financial challenge of attending university is principally the cost of room and board. The nearest access to higher education facilities is in cities more than 60 km from Todos Santos. While there is one boarding house in La Paz that serves the main campus of the state university, *Universidad Autónoma de Baja California Sur* (UABCS), it has a long wait list and students often lose hope to gain access to this affordable lodging after a couple years of waiting.

There is a general sentiment held by those in Todos Santos that students who are able to continue on to study at the university level from Todos Santos are not sufficiently prepared for the challenging academic rigor. A secondary concern is that even those who are able to obtain a college degree experience a difficult time finding jobs in the area upon graduation.

In some families, the strong bonds between generations can prove a hurdle as youth can have a difficult time convincing parents and grandparents to allow them to leave for college.

Anecdotally, there is also significant underage drinking, drug use and pregnancy with the youth population. Many parents we talked to suggest the need for increased access to extracurricular activities to keep youth engaged after school and during school breaks. Youth identified wanting more opportunities for sports, arts (fine art, music and dance) and English language.

### **Opportunities for CSU involvement**

Research:

- In-depth study of youth needs and regional mental health issues

Student programs:

- Cultural exchange - interaction with youth each time a group of students comes into town
- Assist in afterschool and summer programs
- Sports – organize games, tournaments and coaching opportunities

Community outreach:

- Youth empowerment and preparatory program
  - Mentorship
  - Career and professional development guidance
  - Leadership and entrepreneurship courses
- After school programs
  - Sports, art, music and dance
  - Science education and related courses or workshops
- Open CSU Center facility to a proposed Todos Santos UABCS (BCS state university) extension to ease the transition to college for local youth and remove some of the cultural and financial barriers

Potential local partners:

- Universidad Autónoma de Baja California Sur (UABCS)
- High school and secondary schools
- The Palapa Society – Youth education within the Todos Santos community  
<http://palapasociety.org/>
- Centro de Investigaciones Biológicas del Noroeste (CIBNOR)- PACE, Science Outreach Program,  
[www.cibnor.mx/es/ninosyjovenes](http://www.cibnor.mx/es/ninosyjovenes)
- Raíz del Fondo- Jóvenes Líderes, Young Leaders Program, [www.raizdefondo.org](http://www.raizdefondo.org)

### Language Courses

Members of the community are eager to have increased access to language courses. As the rate of tourism and number of foreign residents grows in the region, English language has become an increasing need for young people entering the work force. Community respondents were appreciative of the English classes the Palapa Society offers local youth, and noted a need for additional and advanced English classes for people over the age of 15. Interest also exists among the area's English-speaking population to have an opportunity to take Spanish classes.

### Opportunities for CSU involvement

Student programs and outreach:

- Language coordinator to spearhead and organize all language courses

English

- Student teachers from the ESL department
- Student Interns
- Conversation partners

Spanish:

- Spanish language courses for students in specific focus areas, i.e. agriculture, engineering, natural resources
- Online courses and facilitation of Spanish courses in the community

Potential partners:

- The Palapa Society- Todos Santos non-profit, provides English opportunities for local youth,  
<http://palapasociety.org/>
- INTO – Brings ambitious international students and universities together, [www.intohigher.com](http://www.intohigher.com)
- Local Spanish teachers

### Education system:

There is one traditional high school that serves Todos Santos and Pescadero, as well as a new web-based high school in El Pescadero, a secondary school in each town, two public, and three private primary schools in Todos Santos and one primary school in El Pescadero.

The Mexican educational system has been in a state of upheaval recently due to federal reforms and teacher strikes. Locally, schools face high teacher turn-over as the Todos Santos area is seen as a bridge to teaching opportunities in La Paz or Los Cabos. Many teachers live in La Paz and commute to Todos Santos or El Pescadero which results in a higher teacher absentee rate and a lack of long-term commitment to students. There are also few continuing education and capacity building opportunities for teachers.

The director of the high school commented on high levels of student absenteeism, due to students needing to work and being too tired to come to school. He also has noted an approximate 30% drop-out rate each year. He thinks this is due to both the high costs of school and the fact that around 30% of the high school student body comes from migrant farm worker families and some don't return year after year.

### Opportunities for CSU involvement

Research:

- Measurement tools that can track results of change in the educational system

Student Programs:

- Student teachers

Outreach:

- Capacity building programs in collaboration with *La Vaca Independiente*, which provides opportunities for parents, school directors and teachers. The programs can be adapted to the specific needs of the community. [www.lavaca.edu.mx](http://www.lavaca.edu.mx)
- Programs for parents to promote literacy to strengthen their support of their kids' education

Potential Partners:

- School teachers and directors
- La Vaca Independiente [www.lavaca.edu.mx](http://www.lavaca.edu.mx)

### Valuing the environment

A core desire of many respondents was having a clean and healthy place to live, as well as kindling strong environmental values. Primary areas of concern were: quantity and quality of water, appropriate waste disposal and proposed mines in the region.

### Water

There is a great concern over the quantity (i.e. groundwater availability) and quality of the water supply. According to the National Water Commission (CONAGUA), there are three main aquifers in the focus region (Todos Santos, El Pescadero and La Matanza) providing altogether a total volume of 9Mm<sup>3</sup> annually. However, local residents have found it challenging to access factual, data-driven information to gain a greater understanding of the true state of the watershed.

Water-delivery infrastructural challenges are significant. There are two water dispersal systems, the ejido<sup>1</sup> (which is primarily for agricultural use, but households are also connected to this system) and the municipal domestic and commercial system (OOMSAPAS<sup>2</sup>). Challenges include broken pumps and pipes, leaks and insufficient meters. According to Gerardo de Jesus Chiw Unzón from OOMSAPAS at a community forum in May, there are 2,400 users of municipal water in Todos Santos, of which, 400 have meters. The ejido does not have individual meters for water. Without meters, it is difficult to have an economic incentive to conserve water. There is also a sentiment that the lack of understanding the value of water results in overuse. Individuals are also concerned about the quality of water, particularly as it relates to agriculture run-off and heavy metals.

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<sup>1</sup> An *ejido* is an area of communal land used for agriculture, on which community members individually possess and farm or ranch a specific parcel. Ejido members or *ejidatarios* make land tenure decisions communally. The system was introduced as a component of the agrarian land reform in Mexico in the early 1900s.

<sup>2</sup> Organismo Operador Municipal del, Sistema de Agua Potable, Alcantarillado y Saneamiento

## Opportunities for CSU involvement

### Research:

- Quantity and quality of ground and surface water
- Desalination processes
- Best practices for water saving irrigation systems
- Surface water issues and water retention

### Student programs:

- Water quality testing
- Water quantity testing
- Collaboration with *Universidad Autónoma de Baja California Sur (UABCS)* “Carrera del Agua,” a new degree on water studies based on an interdisciplinary approach.

### Community outreach and education:

- Water promoters
- Experiential education
- Public environmental education workshops and lectures series

### Potential Local Partners:

- Niparaja – Regional environmental conservation NGO, has done extensive research on La Paz aquifer and has developed educational material <http://www.niparaja.org/>
- Waterkeeper Alliance – Citizen water monitors, has a chapter in La Paz and Todos Santos <http://waterkeeper.org/>
- San Diego Natural History Museum (PROBEA) – Bi-regional Environmental Education Program, “Tell me about the Watershed” <http://www.sdnhm.org/education/programas-de-educacion-mexico/education-programs-mexico/>
- National Water Commission (CONAGUA) – “Espacios para la Cultura del Agua,” Has potential funding available for a citizen water promoter program <http://www.conagua.gob.mx/>
- Universidad Autónoma de Baja California Sur (UABCS) “Carrera de Agua,” Water Major Degree
- Centro de Investigaciones Biológicas del Noroeste (CIBNOR) – Federal Research Institution, <http://www.cibnor.mx/>

## Waste management

There is no integrated solid waste management in Todos Santos or any other town in Baja California Sur. Todos Santos produces 12,272 tons of trash per year or 2.3 kilos per person, per day.<sup>3</sup> The lack of an adequate solid waste management and disposal – the area has no sanitary landfill, uses open burning practices and has a poor waste collection system infrastructure. In addition, a lack of treatment for hazardous residues and accumulation of agro-plastics has left many regional residents concerned.

### Specific concerns include:

- Public health issues - Breathing burning plastics, direct and indirect contact with agrochemicals
- Environmental health issues - Air pollution, water and soils contamination derived from open garbage dumps without environmental regulation as well as agrochemicals
- Visual contamination – Trash and organic debris in public areas affect the image of the so-called “Pueblo Mágico de Todos Santos”

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<sup>3</sup> Programa estatal para la prevención y gestión integral de residuos para el estado de Baja California Sur (2011).

- Lacking cultural awareness around appropriate waste production (e.g. less waste production practices), management (e.g. recycling) and disposal

**Human Waste Management:** 74% of the population of Todos Santos and 51% of El Pescadero has access to sewage systems.<sup>4</sup> There is one privately-managed wastewater plant treatment in Todos Santos with capacity of 30 liters per second. Treated wastewater is used exclusively for industrial activities. There is a water storage basin “*cárcamo*” in El Pescadero where the wastewater is stored and eventually filtered through the aquifer and released in to an *arroyo* (wash) and the ocean.

### Opportunities for CSU involvement

Research:

- Alternative methods and new technologies
- Alternative models of waste management administration
- Environmental health impacts
- Public health impacts

Student programs:

- Interdisciplinary and multi-faceted approach including:
  - Engineering, sociology, language and urban planning
- Create educational programs for and with community

Community outreach:

- Facilitate community alliance of concerned citizens to help set goals and create an action plan to an adequate waste management system in town.
- Integrated education program for students, parents, authorities, etc., around using less, reusing, recycling, separating waste
- Public environmental education workshops and lectures series

Potential local partners:

- Punto Verde – Todos Santos recycling distribution center, interested in starting educational programming in schools
- SINADES – Pescadero Community Center, led a mega community clean-up campaign in July 2015
- Ponguinguiola – La Paz based community and recycling center [www.ponguinguiola.org/](http://www.ponguinguiola.org/)
- Ecological Project International – Experiential science based education for youth, has a youth eco-club, primarily in La Paz, but high school students from Todos Santos have participated [www.ecologyproject.org](http://www.ecologyproject.org)
- San Diego Natural History Museum (PROBEA) – Bi-regional Environmental Education Program. They have co-developed didactic material on environmental education programs between Northwestern Mexican localities and San Diego Natural History Museum.

### Mines

The community perceives the proposed open pit gold mine, known as “Los Cardones,” in the foothills of the Sierra La Laguna as an environmental threat. Of primary concern is the impact the mine would have on the water shed and the agricultural and tourism industries, the two strongest economic drivers in the region. Anti-mine sentiment is prevalent throughout the region and has untied citizens in opposition.

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<sup>4</sup> Programa Subregional de Desarrollo Urbano de Todos Santos-El Pescadero-Las Playitas, La Paz, BCS (2012)



According to a study by the Center for Social Responsibility in Mining of the University of Queensland in Australia, “Los Cardones mining project has very low potential to bring economic, social or environmental benefits to Baja California Sur,” and that the “relatively small economic contribution that the project would make is not enough to validate the problems this type of mining would bring to the region.”<sup>5</sup>

### **Opportunities for CSU involvement**

Research:

- Impacts of mine - environmental, social and economic

Student programs:

- Cost and benefit analysis of mine
- Effects of open-pit mining
- Create educational materials around the mine and importance of the watershed

Community outreach and education:

- Experiential environmental program valuing the Sierra La Laguna and the watershed

Potential local partners:

- CONAMP- National Park service that manages the Sierra La Laguna. Todos Santos office adamantly against the mine and interested in environmental education.
- International Community Foundation (ICF), contracted Center For Social Responsibility in Mining (CSRMI) of the University of Queensland in Australia to develop an analysis of Los Cardones mine and mining in general in Baja California Sur <http://www.icfdn.org/reports/csrmi/csrmi.php>
- Agua Vale Más Que Oro – Citizen group leading the anti-mine movement
- NIPARAJÁ- Regional environmental conservation NGO, has a an anti-mine program in Sierra de La Laguna <http://www.niparaja.org>

### **Public health**

The two primary reported illnesses or diseases in the region according to the health department are acute respiratory infections and intestinal infections.<sup>6</sup> Additionally, infectious diseases such as Dengue and Rickettsia have sparked community concern, in addition to high cancer rates, kidney issues, STDs and teen pregnancy. While these are community concerns, little research evidence is available to support understanding of the severity of these topics, specifically for the Todos Santos/El Pescadero area.

There is significant regional concern over nutrition-related diseases such as diabetes, hypertension and obesity. The diabetes rates in the state of Baja California Sur is 8.5%, the national mean is 9.2%. However, the prevalence of overweight (26.2%) and obese (23.0%) children aged 5-11 years is considerably higher compared to the national mean (19.8% and 14.6%, respectively). In general in Baja California Sur, 49% of children in primary school are considered to be overweight at some level, as well as 8 out of 10 men and women above the age of 20.<sup>7</sup>

### **Opportunities for CSU involvement**

Research:

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<sup>5</sup> “Analysis of a Mining Development in Baja California Sur, Mexico: The Los Cardones Mining Project,” Center for Social Responsibility in Mining (CSRMI), University of Queensland in Australia, January 2014

<sup>6</sup> Dirección General de Epidemiología, Secretaría de Salud. Sistema Nacional de Salud.

<sup>7</sup> Encuesta Nacional de Salud y Nutrición 2012. Resultados por entidad federativa. Baja California Sur. Instituto Nacional de Salud Pública.

- Baseline studies to greater understand public health concerns
- Environmental degradation effects on public health issues:
  - Open-burning of the dump, agrochemicals use, water quality-related infectious diseases
- One health – Integrated human, environmental and animal health approach

Community outreach and education:

- Public health workshop and lecture series
- Nutrition and healthy cooking classes

Potential local partners:

- Todos Santos Centro de Salud – Offers diabetes prevention and management workshops for the community
- State Secretary of Health –Provide state and municipal health statistics [www.saludbcs.gob.mx](http://www.saludbcs.gob.mx)
- Omar Piña and Jessica – Provide traditional healing workshops and nutrition consulting in Todos Santos
- Secretary of Health, Epidemiologist, Dr. León León
- Epidemiologist Researcher at CIBNOR, Dr. Ramon Gaxiola Robles – Interested in studying and combating public health topics, specifically obesity and diabetes in the region

### **Sustainable/Responsible Development**

Growth in Baja California Sur, especially the southern portion of the state, is happening quickly and in many cases without following a development plan. Baja California Sur is the least populated state in Mexico; however, it is the second fastest growing. From 2005 to 2010, the population of Todos Santos grew 25% to 5,148 residents and the population of El Pescadero grew 43% to 2,338<sup>8</sup>.

Both El Pescadero and Todos Santos have created a development plan in the past few years. Still, residents commented on the lack of community participation in the creation of the plan and the plans' lack of enforceability.

Population growth to the area is attributed to:

- Agricultural workers from interior Mexico who have taken up residence
- American, Canadian, Italian and other expatriate residents, some who live in the area year-round and many who live there seasonally
- Service and tourism industry providers (guides, waiters, restaurant and hotel owners) from other parts of Mexico who come to the Todos Santos area seeking employment opportunities

In several conversations with residents this influx of newcomers to the region, and the potential for many more residents in the future, is a significant area of importance. There are several social, cultural, environmental and infrastructural impacts that were identified.

Individuals interviewed identified a need to:

- Understand and have more respect for other cultures
- Not lose the essence and unique history and culture of the region given the new growth
- Adequately prepare youth to be competitively employed in the service and tourism sector
- Improve public services to meet increasing demand, for example; solid waste management systems, potable water infrastructure, police force etc.
- Research and analyze the social, economic and environmental impacts of increased growth

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<sup>8</sup> Conteo de Población y Vivienda, 2005, Resultados Definitivos; XIII Censo de Población y Vivienda 2010, Resultados definitivos. Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía (INEGI) <http://www.inegi.org.mx>

## Opportunities for CSU involvement

Research:

- Social and environmental carrying capacities
- Social, cultural, environmental, economic and infrastructural impacts of current and future development
- Environmental resilience

Community outreach and education:

- Create programs that promote cross-cultural understanding and respect

Potential Local Partners:

- Todos Santos Pueblo Mágico Committee – Designed current Todos Santos Development plan
- La Paz Sustainable City Initiative – In collaboration with the International Community Foundation, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and the Municipality of La Paz (in which Todos Santos is located) the city of La Paz has recently been enrolled in the IDB’s Emerging Sustainable Cities initiative <http://www.icfdn.org/initiatives/escilp.php>
- Como Vamos La Paz – A citizen governance and monitoring group which is an aspect of the Sustainable City Initiative [www.comovamoslapaz.com](http://www.comovamoslapaz.com)

## Business training and alternative business models

The primary industries in the Todos Santos region are tourism and agriculture, with a smaller percentage of the population participating in fishing and ranching.<sup>9</sup>

In the tourism sector, community residents indicated a lack of preparation within the native resident workforce to meet the needs of this industry. They pointed to little access to English classes for youth and adults and limited professional development preparation for local service providers despite the tourism degrees offered in La Paz and Los Cabos.

Community members also identified a desire for increased training in trades, such as mechanics, carpentry, tailoring, and cosmetology, as well as training in small business management and entrepreneurship.

Participants in the agricultural and fishing industries identified intermediaries as a challenge. The majority of small-scale farmers (1-10 hectares of land cultivated) grow Poblano chilies for a national market. Under the current distribution system, intermediaries select the produce, determine a price and are responsible for transportation of the product from the region to interior Mexico. Farmers expressed concern at being “at the whim” of these so-called “*coyotes*,” who have at times given unfair prices or have gone so far as not paying for the produce.

There is a group of ejidatarios and sons of ejidatarios in Todos Santos who have formed a 60 chile producer cooperative in-order to begin exploring the possibility of selling more directly to distributors in mainland Mexico. Their challenges have included learning to work “cooperatively,” as well as limited marketing, distribution and supply chain management training.

About 100 fishermen in the area rely on a similar business model. Fishermen in Todos Santos belong to one of two cooperatives, one is private and the other is made up of ejido members. The majority of the

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<sup>9</sup> Centro de Estudios de Urbanismo y Arquitectura SA de CV (CEURA) based on data from XII Censo de Población y Vivienda 2000, Resultados definitivos. Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía (INEGI) <http://www.inegi.org.mx>

day's catch is purchased by intermediaries from La Paz or Los Cabos on the fishermen's ramp at Punta Lobos. Very few fish are directly sold locally, but fish that are available for purchase are sold on the boat ramp or at a fisherman's house. According to the Todos Santos Ejido, the majority of the fish that are commercially sold in Todos Santos comes in from La Paz, Los Cabos and even Lopez Mateos (approximately a four-hour drive from Todos Santos).

Fishermen expressed interest in exploring new business models, including whale watching and sport fishing tours.

### **Opportunities for CSU involvement**

Research:

- Explore new market opportunities for regional self-sufficiency and resiliency

Community outreach and education:

- Entrepreneurial and business training and coaching
- Support for local marketplace development
- Training and support on cooperative business models
- Workshops on value-added products such as canned chilies, salsas and preserves, dehydrated produce and other agriculture extension related topics

Potential local partners:

- Todos Santos and Pescadero Ejidos
- Todos Santos Chile Farmer cooperative
- SINADES – Women who are involved with the organic greenhouse project are interested in creating a regional marketplace in El Pescadero

### **CONCLUSION**

The results of this study are intended to create a launching point for new educational program and research development for the Todos Santos and CSU communities. The engagement with Todos Santos and El Pescadero residents during the creation of this community assessment was an important initial step in building strong and on-going partnerships with the local community; yet, it is still an initial step. CSU has made a long-term commitment to the region, and it is the University's and the Todos Santos Center's responsibility to continue this open-and-participatory dialogue and actively create opportunities to work collaborative toward shared goals.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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In La Paz were: CIBNOR, CONAGUA, Ecological Project International, Junta Local de Sanidad Vegetal LAP, INEGI, INIFAP, Niparáj, OOMSAPAS, Ponguinguiola AC, SAGARPA/Jefe de Distrito DDR 03 LAP, Secretaria de Salud BCS and UABCS.