



FACES OF THE COMMONS: ASSESSMENT OF NETWORK POTENTIAL IN CENTRAL AMERICA & COLOMBIA

Sandra Contreras Aprile
INDEPENDENT CONSULTANT

TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	1
1. BASIC INFORMATION ON THE CHOICE OF COUNTRIES AGAINST THE METHODOLOGY CRITERIA	4
2. BASIC INFORMATION ON THE ENVIRONMENT THE CHOSEN AFFILIATES WORK IN	8
3. AFFILIATES CONTRIBUTION TO THE NETWORK	10
4. HOW CAN THE NETWORK HELP AFFILIATES IN THE REGION?	14
5. COLLECTIVE IDENTITY OF CC AFFILIATES AND PREFERRED MODEL OF LEADERSHIP	19
6. RECOMMENDATIONS	23

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. Subject Matter

This assessment provides a detailed overview of three CC affiliates (El Salvador, Costa Rica and Colombia), including their motivations, needs and potential. The objective of this assessment is to contribute to the Creative Commons (CC) strategic and governance processes by providing an in-depth understanding of the affiliates.

2. Methods of Analysis

The method of analysis for Central America and Colombia is based on 7 individual in-depth interviews of representatives from El Salvador (2 members of CC El Salvador and 1 affiliates' partner), Costa Rica (2 members of CC Costa Rica) and Colombia (1 member of CC Colombia and 1 affiliate partner). The interviewees were selected to reflect geographic distribution, size and model of involvement, duration of involvement, as well as diversity.

3. Limitations of Report

The research was carefully prepared following the Faces of the Commons discussion guide and instructions from the assessment coordinator. However, there were some unavoidable limitations as described below:

- All interviews were conducted online and lasted a maximum of 2 hours. The internet connection wasn't stable and on several occasions it affected the flow of these conversations because the researcher had to ask the interviewees to repeat the answers or vice versa.
- The delivery of the interview transcripts was significantly delayed and this caused for the analysis process to fall behind schedule. The transcriber that was highly recommended and hired did not meet the agreed upon deadline and the researcher had to outsource to two other transcribers in order to have all the transcripts that were needed for the analysis. Since the research process was already under a tight deadline this didn't leave much time for a thorough analysis. More time for the interview and transcription phases of the research project to ensure that enough time is left for the analysis phase would have been helpful.

- The researcher was an outsider to the CC world, which on the one hand contributed to the objectivity and reduced biases. On the other hand, however, being an outsider meant that the researcher had to rely on the El Salvador co public lead to provide a more detailed picture of the background of CC. Since the timeline for the research phase out was limited a package of key CC documents would've contributed for the researcher to acquire an overview of network more promptly. The researcher searched online to familiarize herself with one affiliates' work and activities, but the other two affiliated members did not have a functioning website at the time.

4. Results

The Central America and Colombia affiliates all share a sense of belonging to the global movement that has been instrumental to keeping the movement alive. That said, this sentiment cannot alone sustain the global movement in the long run, and additional support and resources will be key in order for CC to evolve as a movement.

In Central America and Colombia, the open movements' main challenges are linked to lack of resources (time and funding). The three affiliate organizations lack independent funds to carry out CC specific activities on a continuous basis and that ends up affecting their ability to reach a wider scale with their initiatives. The issue of lack of time also arose; all of the affiliates indicated that CC related activities and initiatives tend to become a significant additional workload to their already busy professional lives. Depending completely on the goodwill of volunteers that don't have all the resources (financial and/or technical) needed will eventually compromise the affiliate's ability to sustain the CC agenda or to have scale

The Central America and Colombia affiliates are a diverse group of actors with different capacities. The Costa Rica affiliate is a research based chapter that has specialized in promoting the use of the right licenses in educational resources and open knowledge sharing. The Colombia and El Salvador affiliates have key capacities in community cultural management/collaborative cultural management, licenses/intellectual property, and open and free software. The ability of Colombia and El Salvador to reach out to different communities is a very valuable trait. This allows them to broaden their scope of influence considerably by putting licenses into practice among creators from different sectors and also increases their ability to disseminate the values of CC among the consumers of these goods.

5. Conclusions

Among the Central America and Colombia affiliates there is a clear overarching sense of accomplishment that was shared by all the Central America. All interviewees genuinely

believed in Creative Commons's ability to become a global social movement and network that transcends geographic borders, ideologies, language, technological and operational barriers.

CC's ability to become a social movement and vibrant network with limited resources is quite remarkable. However, the network has reached a point in these countries where it needs to dedicate human and financial resources to support the affiliates in carrying out CC's important mission.

6. Recommendations

Recommendations discussed include:

- Facilitating systematic knowledge sharing among affiliates.
- Facilitating active participation of members/teams in international discussions/conversations (in Spanish).
- Establishing regular communication to encourage exchanges, participation and a deeper sense of connection to the global movement.
- Addressing the need to establish a mechanism that can help fund initiatives or strategic needs that affiliates have identified.
- Providing mentoring and a basic package of training materials to new affiliates.

1. BASIC INFORMATION ON THE CHOICE OF COUNTRIES AGAINST THE METHODOLOGY CRITERIA

The discussions for choosing which affiliates were to be part of the Faces of the Commons assessment in the Central American region were facilitated by Claudia Cristiani- El Salvador co public lead. Initially El Salvador, Guatemala and Costa Rica were the three countries that were mentioned as potential case studies for being countries that are geographically part of Central America. Claudia Cristiani reached out to the public leads of Costa Rica and Guatemala to also assess their availability to be part of the research. Based on this factor as well as on their areas of expertise it was determined that Costa Rica would be included in the regional research for being an affiliate that has several years of operation and for having a University based organizational model of involvement. El Salvador is a newer member in the region that has a dynamic composition which brings together creative artist communities, free software and open hardware collectives. Furthermore, after discussions and exchanges between Claudia Cristiani, Scann –CC Argentina’s public lead– and Claudio Ruiz –Latin America Regional Coordinator– it was deemed important that CC Colombia should be included in the research in order for case studies in the region to be representative in terms of size, model and duration of involvement, as well as diversity.

Please see below a snapshot of the affiliates based on the criteria for choosing the sample countries:

Snapshot of Affiliates			
	El Salvador	Costa Rica	Colombia
Country data			
Political structure	Presidential republic	Presidential republic	Presidential republic
Country Size	21,041 sq km	51,100 sq km	1.14 m sq km
Population	6.2 million	4.7 million	48.23 million
Affiliate team			
Type of affiliate	Only one member of the CC affiliate team is an employee (without pay) of the affiliate organization, the rest of the CC SV members work in other organizations/institutions. All of them work for CC SV as volunteers.	All members of the CC affiliate team are employees of the affiliate organization.	All members of the CC affiliate team are employees of the affiliate organization.
Description of affiliate organization	<i>Fundación AccesArte</i> (NGO) AccesArte's mission is to strengthen the role that culture plays and can play in the human development process through the production and dissemination of academic resources and discussion.	University of Costa Rica Through the <i>Vicerrectoría de Investigación</i> (Research Department), the University of Costa Rica promotes access to knowledge and open educational resources as well as management of intellectual property rights of academic publications.	<i>Fundación Karisma</i> (NGO) Karisma's mission is to support the spread of good use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) in Colombia.
Number of active members	5	3	5
Year of affiliation	2013	2010	2006

Table I. Snapshot of affiliates

The research for Central America and Colombia is based on individual in-depth interviews of representatives from El Salvador (2 members of CC El Salvador and 1 affiliates' partner),

Costa Rica (2 members of CC Costa Rica) and Colombia (1 member of CC Colombia and 1 affiliates' partner). The interviews were all conducted online via Skype or Ringr, all of the interviewees were extremely cooperative and readily available to dedicate time to being interviewed. It was evident that all interviewees are very dedicated and committed to the work they carry out with CC from their different capacities and countries.

Please see below for the breakdown of interviewees for this research:

Creative Commons El Salvador		
Name	Claudia Cristiani	Emilio Velis
Position/Role	Co-public lead	Volunteer
Affiliated Institution	<i>Fundación AccesArte</i>	<i>Fundación AccesArte</i> *member of CC ES but not an employee of the affiliated institution
Fields of expertise	Community cultural management / Collaborative cultural management	Open Hardware / Fab Lab
Affiliate's Partner		
Name	Paula Alvarez	
Position/Role	Director of <i>La Casa Tomada</i>	
Affiliated Institution	N/A	
Fields of expertise	Collaborative cultural management	

Table II. Interviewees from Creative Commons El Salvador.

Creative Commons Costa Rica		
Name	Meilyn Garro	Dennis Campos
Position/Role	Public lead	Legal lead
Affiliated Institution	University of Costa Rica	University of Costa Rica
Fields of expertise	Academic research	Licenses / Intellectual property

Table III. Interviewees from Creative Commons Costa Rica.

Creative Commons Colombia	
Name	María Juliana Soto
Position/Role	Public lead
Affiliated Institution	<i>Fundación Karisma</i>
Fields of expertise	Research / Collective communication
Affiliate's Partner	
Name	Alejandro Angel
Position/Role	N/A
Affiliated Institution	N/A
Fields of expertise	Filmmaker and producer of CC Film Festival & New Media

Table IV. Interviewees from Creative Commons Colombia.

2. BASIC INFORMATION ON THE ENVIRONMENT THE CHOSEN AFFILIATES WORK IN

The three affiliate countries chosen for this study differ from each other a lot and therefore it's necessary to break down the context in which they operate. El Salvador and Costa Rica are part of the same geographic area but nonetheless are significantly different from each other due to their history. Since the 1960's the majority of the Central American countries with the exception of Costa Rica were periodically immersed in armed conflict.

In El Salvador the country was devastated by a civil war that took place from 1980 to 1992 and took the lives of approximately 75,000 people. The end of the civil war in 1992 brought important political and structural reforms that resulted in sustained economic growth and a significant reduction in poverty level until 2002. However, despite these advances El Salvador has been plagued by crime and violence that continue to threaten social development in the country and negatively affect the quality of life of the people.¹ Violence continues to be on the rise and in 2015 El Salvador ended with the world's highest homicide rate in the world.² In terms of freedom of expression, the Salvadoran constitution clearly provides it. However, it is reported that journalists who cover corruption and gang violence are often harassed and end up engaging in self-censorship. Internet access is open and the government and other civil society organizations have programs to expand access to underserved areas.³ CC El Salvador operates in a fragile democracy characterized by intense ideological polarization that can be attributed to persisting social and economic inequalities. High rates of violence and migration (mainly to the US) are legacies of the civil war and hinder efforts to promote democratic citizenship in El Salvador. Despite these obstacles there is a vibrant community that actively promotes open access, free culture, open software and hardware, human rights and overall collaborative creative processes.

Costa Rica is considered to be a development success story in several fronts; it's one of the most prosperous and politically stable countries in the Latin American region and is the only Central American country without an army after it was abolished in 1948. Since the 1970's the Costa Rican government has consistently invested in social spending and thus made tremendous progress towards providing universal access to healthcare, education, clean water and sanitation.⁴ The combination of political stability, social development and steady

¹ El Salvador Overview. (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/elsalvador/overview>

² El Salvador | Country report | Freedom in the World | 2016. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2016/el-salvador>

³ Ibid

⁴ El País | El PNUD en Costa Rica. (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www.cr.undp.org/content/costarica/es/home/countryinfo.html>

economic growth has resulted in a significant reduction of poverty rates which places Costa Rica as an upper middle-income country.⁵ However, despite these advances it is reported that there is public discontent due to allegations of official corruption and rising rates of crime. In terms of freedom of expression Costa Rican media are free from state interference, attacks on journalists are rare and internet access is unrestricted.⁶ It is important to note that the system in Costa Rica is very supportive to the CC affiliate. As mentioned before the CC affiliate is the University of Costa Rica, which was founded in 1941 and is one of the largest public universities of Central America with approximately forty thousand students.

Colombia has suffered from civil war since 1964, compounding poverty, internal migration, insecurity, corruption, drug trafficking and other issues. While Colombia is a middle-income country, it is also one of the most unequal societies in the world with vast disparities between the urban and rural populations.⁷ A fragile state in rural areas and the periphery, deep inequality and a persistent rural-urban divide have enabled armed groups to gain footholds throughout many parts of the country. In terms of freedom of expression, this is guaranteed by the constitution and opposition views are widely expressed in the media, internet access it also unrestricted. However, it is reported that dozens of journalists who reported on drug trafficking and corruption have been murdered since the mid 1990's.⁸

Colombia is going through profound societal change; after nearly four years of formal talks between the Colombian government and the FARC (*Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia*), the delegations from FARC and the Colombian Government announced the end of the negotiations and a peace deal that would end over fifty years of conflict on August 24th 2016. The signing ceremony of the peace agreement with the FARC on September 26, 2016 set the beginning of the demobilization and concentration in 31 rural areas across the country where combatants will have to turn their weapons over. However, the whole peace process was thrown into turmoil after 50.2 % of Colombians voted to reject the deal in a national plebiscite.⁹

⁵ Costa Rica Overview. (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/costarica/overview>

⁶ Costa Rica | Country report | Freedom in the World | 2015. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2015/costa-rica>

⁷ See World Bank data: <http://data.worldbank.org/country/colombia>

⁸ Colombia | Country report | Freedom in the World | 2015. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2015/colombia>

⁹ Retrieved from <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/oct/07/nobel-peace-prize-colombia-farc-peace-process>

It is important to highlight that CC Colombia recently sent a letter to the Colombian Congress to urge that the revision of the property right law incorporate flexible exceptions to copyright that protects the rights of users.¹⁰ This letter was signed by as many as 17 CC affiliates all over the world and indicates a level of influence and advocacy that CC Colombia has.

3. AFFILIATES CONTRIBUTION TO THE NETWORK

The CC affiliates in the Central America region and Colombia have key common characteristics on the personal and organizational level, as well as the community level. On the personal level they all share a deep commitment to the core values of the open movement, to what it represents, and they are well aware of the key role that they play in “spreading the word”/driving the CC agenda throughout their different spheres of influence. As expressed by CC El Salvador:

“...the people who are involved in this kind of work really love what they do, there’s a motivation that goes beyond whether you’re being paid or that it’s a job. That in itself is priceless and not easily found everywhere. Not only do we enjoy the work we do but there’s a great sense of satisfaction, we do it because we want to do it [...] people are committed...”

Claudia Cristiani, co-public lead CC El Salvador

This quote reflects the deep sense of personal commitment and engagement that is shared among the interviewed affiliates and is what drives members to participate and to sustain the existence of the global movement.

The Central America and Colombia affiliates operate with significant financial and operational constraints that will be detailed ahead. However, despite these constraints, there is a certain sense of overarching belonging to global movement that has been instrumental to keep the movement alive. That said this sentiment cannot alone sustain the global movement in the long run and additional support and resources will be key in order for CC to evolve as a movement.

¹⁰ Creative Commons Colombia. (2016). Retrieved from <https://co.creativecommons.org/>

At the organizational level there are similarities between CC El Salvador and CC Colombia in the sense that both affiliate organizations are non-governmental organizations (*AccesArte* and *Fundación Karisma*) that provide a platform for a wide variety of players that range from the artistic, cultural, educational, creators, free and open software community, as well as activists and legal and policy advocates.

The ability to reach out to different communities (as mentioned earlier) plays an important role to both CC Colombia and CC El Salvador. For a member that has the type of scale that CC Colombia has it has allowed them to go beyond only focusing on the technical and legal aspects of the work. This ability to reach out to different communities has been instrumental for CC Colombia to be active and influential among communities of creators and also carry out advocacy efforts among public institutions. For a smaller and younger member such as CC El Salvador this ability to reach out to different communities has put them on the right path but they still face many constraints to establish a sustainable CC agenda.

CC Costa Rica is based in the public university so in practice focuses more in promoting free access to knowledge and open licensing for the research that's generated by the university. It's a member that seems content to concentrate their limited resources and efforts on teaching and promoting the technical and legal aspects of the work among the academic community. However, this concentration of efforts has limited their ability to influence a wider community.

In terms of organizational culture, they all share the value of promoting universal access to research, education and culture. As a community they all originate from being demand driven in the sense that each of them were already using CC licenses (Costa Rica and Colombia) or had an existing need to use a license (El Salvador). That said, they are diverse in the sense that as organizations they all have distinct ways of promoting the technical and legal aspects of the work but all coincide that this is a very important aspect of their work.

CHALLENGES THE OPEN MOVEMENT FACES

In Central America and Colombia, the open movements' main challenges are linked to lack of resources (time and funding). The three affiliate organizations lack independent funds to carry out CC specific activities on a continuous basis and that ends up affecting their ability to reach a wider scale with their initiatives. As clearly stated by an affiliate:

“...to a certain extent I feel that we can’t engage in bigger projects and initiatives because there aren’t funds or time to dedicate to this [...] I don’t like not being able to ensure my team that we can carry things out or cover the cost of doing them.”

Anonymous

The issue of lack of time also came up; all of the members of affiliates indicated that CC related activities and initiatives tend to become an additional piece to the regular work load (that is already busy) they carry out on a day to day basis. There are also challenges at the organizational level; in El Salvador the affiliate members are spread out throughout different sectors and they are all volunteers. For example, Claudia Cristiani (co-public lead) works (unpaid) for *AccesArte* which is the affiliate organization and the rest of the CC team members are volunteers that have other full time jobs. Therefore, CC El Salvador has to make the time to meet during their free time, thus limiting their ability to organize activities on a regular basis and ultimately, raise the visibility of the CC related agenda. Depending on the goodwill of volunteers that don’t have all the resources (financial and/or technical) needed will eventually compromise the affiliates ability to sustain the CC agenda or to have scale. As pointed out by CC El Salvador in countries with high levels of poverty it’s not that easy being a volunteer. It’s common for people to have 2-3 jobs in order to make ends meet, most students work and holding meetings after work hours have concrete implications in terms of transportation costs and ensuring safety.

For the case of Costa Rica and Colombia, the members of the CC teams are all based and paid by the affiliate organizations so to some degree it’s easier to convene and to carry out initiatives more regularly. That said, having all the CC members based in the affiliate organization can also be a limitation to having people who don’t work in the organization join the CC team. However, CC Costa Rica and Colombia have to prioritize and dedicate their time to their organization’s agenda which leaves less time to CC related projects. To date, the movement has benefited greatly from volunteers that are driven by a deep sentiment of commitment to the cause but it’s reaching a point where it needs to evolve.

KEY CAPACITIES OF THE OPEN MOVEMENT

The key capacities of the open movement in Central America and Colombia are founded on the diversity of its members. The Costa Rica affiliate as a research based chapter has specialized in promoting the use of the right licenses in educational resources and open knowledge sharing. The Colombia and El Salvador affiliates have key capacities in

community cultural management/collaborative cultural management, licenses/intellectual property, open and free software.

The ability of Colombia and El Salvador to reach out to different communities is a very valuable trait. This allows them to broaden their scope of influence considerably by putting licenses into practice among creators from different sectors and also increases their ability to disseminate the values of CC among the consumers of these goods.

CC Colombia is one of the older affiliates in the region and therefore has increased capacity in advocacy/policy making and new media. As mentioned earlier in the report CC Colombia is advocating for a balanced reform of the copyright law in the Colombian Congress. On the new media front several organizations, collectives and individuals come together to organize the CC audiovisual festivals in Cali and Medellin and the CC Film Festival in Bogotá. These festivals provide a platform for discussions about free culture, new licenses for creative products and the latest trends in digital audiovisual production. CC Colombia also offers a great example of a website that showcases how to successfully make the work promoted by the affiliates visible and also responds to online questions about licenses.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE AND ENABLING ENVIRONMENT

The affiliate's organizational culture is driven by a high sense of commitment to what the open movement stands for, respect for diversity, and a spirit of collaboration that goes beyond borders. These shared values and beliefs foster an innovative environment; through their engagement with a wide range of communities, CC affiliates in Central America and Colombia actively participating/engaging in different spheres. In general, the affiliates all have a relatively stable supporting environment for their work, there aren't external forces like in other regions of the world that are preventing them for working in this field.

Costa Rica and Colombia could be considered to be ahead in terms of having established support systems in place. In Costa Rica through the fact that the affiliate organization is based in a public university and in Colombia through their 10 years of experience and lessons learned in this field. In El Salvador, there aren't systems or public entities in place that support or work in a sustained manner in topics related to CC, efforts are mainly promoted by individuals because of their personal interests.

For example, CC El Salvador has received support from the Spanish Cultural Center but not from any Salvadoran governmental entity. Universities carry out activities, such as the Free Software Festival but this doesn't happen on a continuous basis. However, all the affiliates have to confront the reality that copyright policies and intellectual property are not mainstream issues among the public and political agenda. All of the affiliates in varying degrees face the challenge of positioning and making these issues more mainstream.

At the organizational level of the affiliates there are structural limitations that are an obstacle for them to take a more active role or drive the changes that will be described in more detail below. This structural limitation relates to the lack of clarity there is regarding the relationship between the affiliates and HQ. On one hand younger affiliates such as El Salvador lack ownership in terms of where they stand in their relationship with HQ and with CC as a whole. They feel identified with the cause of the movement but when policy opportunities have risen they don't have clarity on whether they can speak in the name of CC or not.

At the policy level, this is not necessarily the case for CC Colombia but they have many more years of experience under their belt. Furthermore, there's a need for a basic package of key information about licences, CC's background and regional agenda that affiliates should have as a common baseline. Older affiliates such as CC Colombia can contribute with expertise in that area but the involvement and clear guidance from HQ would be key in order to establish consistency across the network.

4. HOW CAN THE NETWORK HELP AFFILIATES IN THE REGION?

NEEDS

The Central America and Colombia affiliates could all benefit from the following support from HQ:

▣ *Technical* assistance for the enhancement (Colombia's case) and establishment (El Salvador and Costa Rica's case) of the CC affiliates' web page, which would help to ensure a minimum standard of basic information about the CC's work in each country. Having a functional, user friendly and attractive web pages that depict CC's work at the country level

is a key element to advancing the global movement. This should be a priority for HQ and the affiliates. Affiliate web pages should be one component of a broader set of minimum operational standards for CC affiliates.

❑ Capacity building of the affiliates so that they can be better positioned to carry out CC related work.

*“We would need for HQ to invest in capacity building of the affiliates [...] we don’t all have the expertise that is needed and that is a limiting factor for our team. The development of capacities is very important and not facilitating that is an organizational weakness. Having the background of CC’s history, the licenses, the movement, CC’s priorities. If nobody teaches these things to you there isn’t a clear way to learn about them.” **Claudia Cristiani, co-public lead CC El Salvador***

The need for support from HQ is clearly expressed above by CC El Salvador. There should be a minimum standard of knowledge/information that affiliates need to know in order to operate. Without this the global movement will have a limited ability to pursue its agenda.

❑ Hiring a regional CC coordinator full time who is dedicated to promoting different CC projects and products, establishing regional work agendas, organizing meetings and trainings, etc. This is a volunteer-based system that is maintained by affiliates who have full time jobs and many demands on their time. They do their best to include CC related activities into their day to day work but they do not have time to implement CC to its full potential. A paid coordinator who collaborates with volunteers in each country would help to ensure that CC activities are carried out in a timely and successful fashion.

❑ Technical assistance to younger affiliates such as El Salvador in order to help develop and structure its CC strategy and work plan. This should also include follow up support to guarantee the success of the strategies. If affiliates don’t have the technical expertise needed and also lack a strategy and work plan their capacity to operate will be very limited.

❑ HQ engagement with affiliates on a regular basis to encourage exchanges, participation and a deeper sense of connection to the global movement. Although there is an overarching sentiment among the affiliates that they belong to a global movement, this feeling is incipient and the sense of belonging needs to be consolidated. Affiliates are motivated by the cause, and the more they connect to the global program and its goals, the

more they will be inspired to dedicate time to CC. As clearly expressed by the affiliates below, more can be done to capitalize a clear and meaningful sense of belonging:

*“...for example having hangout sessions with affiliates in Latin America, with translation [...] wouldn't be too expensive, nor too difficult to do and we'd all want to do it, it would give us a lot more tools for us (as affiliates) to feel closer to the global network.” **Anonymous***

*“...something that needs to be done at the global level is to establish communication among all the teams...to not have disjointed teams, start by putting teams in touch and then encourage that they talk amongst each other.” **Meilyn Garro, public lead CC Costa Rica***

□ HQ facilitation of systematic knowledge sharing among affiliates; El Salvador, for example, expressed that as a newer affiliate, it would benefit from the lessons learned of other affiliates in the region. This country also mentioned that the “know how” of other longer standing affiliates should be documented (systematized) so that the newer members can learn from previous experiences, both positive and negative. The affiliate in Colombia on the other hand has a wealth of experience and has already documented and developed material that is user friendly. Unfortunately, there is no established system that encourages sharing of information at a regional level and as a result the learning stays within the country. For example, Colombia has developed 3 guides about CC: a general pocket guide, a guide that explains how to license their work and another guide that explains how to use products that have a license.

An online platform that centralizes an inventory of resources such as CC guides and written lessons learned would be useful for the affiliates because the information would be accessible without having to seek it from another country. Currently, affiliates need to look online at web pages that either have too little information about CC activities, are outdated or simply do not exist. A global movement such as CC that is driven by collaboration and sharing of knowledge should invest more in using online tools (web pages or web platforms such as Edmodo) that facilitate learning and information sharing. This does not have to be expensive as sites like Dropbox could be used to house this information. However, someone needs to be responsible for collecting and organizing this information online and informing the affiliates of what has been added or changed over time (see dedicated staff member recommendation above).

□ Ensuring that a broad range of affiliate opinions are taken into account during CC global discussion. Some affiliates expressed language being a barrier to participation in the global discussions. Also, there was a suggestion to open participation to experts who may not be

official affiliates but who could provide important insights to discussions at the global level. This sentiment of lack of participation in and disconnect with the CC global agenda is clearly stated by the affiliates below:

“I tried to get involved in the global discussion on open educational resources but because of time constraints I wasn’t able to commit to the level of involvement that was needed. I asked [...] if someone from the faculty of education could be part of that discussion and I was told ..., that it was preferred that the discussion be among affiliates and not have someone from outside participate.” **Meilyn Garro, public lead CC Costa Rica**

“...I defend the philosophy of CC, the organization as such seems to continue being a club of friends [...] that speak English [...] and that respond to a more traditional model.” **Anonymous**

As long as there isn’t meaningful participation and representation from the affiliates the global movement’s ability to evolve and reach scale will be constrained.

KEY TRENDS

The main key trends the affiliates identify for the future are the following:

1. **Scale:** capacity to take the work that is being done at the local level to a wider audience. Although each of the three affiliates have their country specific capacity and approaches, they all coincide in having the desire to do more and to scale up the work they carry out through the CC agenda.
2. **Advocacy:** continue carrying out advocacy efforts on universal access to knowledge and promote open content in order to create a receptive environment in academia and public institutions.
3. **Global lobby for Copyright reform:** be the entity that leads the discussion about the need for Copyright reform. CC as a global movement has the credibility and credentials to lead and influence copyright reform, however as stated below by CC El Salvador these efforts are not fully visible.

*“...it seems that there isn’t an organization taking the lead at the global level to position this topic on the agenda [...] CC should be leading this [...] copyright laws are being reformed and not necessarily in a good way.” “...the best scenario would be that CC proactively leads the discussion on copyright reform, access to information and knowledge and the challenges copyright laws have.” **Claudia Cristiani, co-public lead CC El Salvador***

In Colombia though, recent copyright reform advocacy efforts involved CC affiliates at the global level and indicates that the CC endorsement can play an influential role.

4. Participation in international discussions: affiliates identify their interest in creating a system or environment that enables a more active participation of individual members or teams in international discussions/conversations.

The ability of the affiliates to take sustainable actions on these key trends in the future points to a broader strategic issue. None of the affiliates pointed out that they turn to the Regional Advisor for support. There also wasn’t any indication of the existence of a regional agenda that provides an overall direction for the members of the network. Having a regional agenda would provide a framework for actions related to the key trends depicted above and could also assist younger members such as El Salvador to establish their country level agendas.

BEST PRACTICES

There are several lessons and best practices that can be shared from Central America and Colombia that are scalable. Colombia is one of the oldest affiliates in the region, has a strong desire to share its expertise with other members, it has done a very good job documenting its processes and CC material and has a strong capacity to engage in advocacy efforts that even involve CC at the global level (i.e. letter signed by 17 CC affiliates to Colombian Congress regarding revision of intellectual property law). Furthermore, sharing their expertise and lessons learned of organizing annual audiovisual, film and new media festival in three different Colombian cities could be of great interest within the region and globally.

At the programmatic level, Costa Rica’s experience in promoting free access to knowledge and open licensing for some of the research that’s generated by the University could be of interest as well. El Salvador could provide lessons learned on how younger/newer members

have successfully engaged and influenced a diverse range of communities and players despite having very limited support and resources. As clearly stated by a CC volunteer:

“...despite being a small group we are very diverse and that allows us to participate in different spheres.” **Emilio Velis, CC El Salvador**

CC El Salvador could also provide valuable insight and lessons learned to what the needs are to set up a new member, what challenges they face and what follow up support they need to launch and sustain their work.

5. COLLECTIVE IDENTITY OF CC AFFILIATES AND PREFERRED MODEL OF LEADERSHIP

Central America and Colombia share a collective identity despite their country specific characteristics that is centered on a sense of belonging to a movement that transcends borders and their commitment to the philosophy of the open movement. They are characterized by having the following “soft skills”: strong communications skills, collaboration and team spirit, deep sense of responsibility, resourcefulness and an extremely high sense of self-motivation. For the most part the Central American region and Colombia share the most important values and definitions that are based on the philosophy of the open movement, of working towards making legal and technical barriers more flexible for people to access knowledge and culture. That said, there are country specific interpretations that highlight the differences among members. CC Costa Rica has a strong focus towards technical and legal matters but their approach as stated below is more traditional.

“...this is a topic of fundamental human rights...copyright and intellectual property are fundamental rights and human rights, but so are the right to education and culture, that’s where we need to seek a point of equilibrium and open licenses are an important mechanism to reach that objective. However, there’s an issue of balance and strategic protection, How can we enable more people to educate themselves, access culture without expropriating the legitimate rights of people and producers to make an income?” **Denis Campo, legal lead CC Costa Rica**

Colombia on the other hand also has a strong capacity in carrying out technical and legal work but as stated below has an approach that embodies the open movement at a wider scale:

“...we share a belief in the philosophy of the open movement...of working towards making legal and technical barriers more flexible in order for people to access knowledge and culture. I believe we all have this in mind and we all believe that CC is a way to do this...” **Anonymous**

Furthermore, all of the affiliates have a strong collaborative work dynamic that in the most part and particularly for CC Colombia and El Salvador is conducive to dialogue among the members of the team. For the case of Costa Rica, the team consists of two people, so it's not quite comparable. However, CC Costa Rica is based in large public institution and they consistently collaborate with other actors in the University to carry out CC related initiatives.

The key values and goals that are predominant among the affiliates in Central America and Colombia are:

- Collaboration

The spirit of collaboration present among the affiliates is one of the driving forces of the openness movement. Collaboration is a value that impacts CC affiliates internally and externally. At the external level, affiliates engage with a wide range of communities to successfully carry out CC initiatives. As confirmed below by the affiliate:

“...we believe things can't be done alone, they're done hand in hand with others, not only because it sounds nice but because you really need different knowledge and abilities, different levels of expertise...” **Anonymous**

At the internal level, as mentioned earlier, none of the affiliates are CC paid staff. Colombia and Costa Rica are employees of the affiliated entity but in the case of El Salvador only one member of the affiliate works (ad honorem) for the affiliate organization, the rest are volunteers. For this reason the CC agenda has to rely heavily on the goodwill and spirit of collaboration of the affiliates. Although this is important, the network has reached a point where it needs to evolve into a sustainable scheme.

- Access to Knowledge

All of the affiliates prioritize this as a goal and principle that the CC movement seeks. There is a clear recognition that teaching and promoting the adoption of the licenses is the basis of

the work and a vehicle to facilitate access to knowledge. As CC El Salvador access points out, this goal is a driving force:

“...if we don’t have universal access to knowledge, if we don’t all have the same rights and opportunities to access knowledge we will continue to be unequal societies that cannot reach their highest potential. Access to the cumulus of knowledge generated by humanity is a human right and that’s how it should be.” **Claudia Cristiani, co-public lead CC El Salvador**

“we all share [...] the idea that universal access to knowledge is possible.”
Claudia Cristiani, co-public lead CC El Salvador

- Sharing and openness:

This is a value that drives the work and is present among all the affiliates. Each of the affiliates, despite varying degrees of scale and influence are carrying out initiatives to educate people on the benefits of sharing and openness.

“...to share the philosophy, show people the value of sharing knowledge and why we should share knowledge.” **Meilyn Garro, public lead CC Costa Rica**

“I really value the commitment to the idea that supports CC’s work, we firmly believe in the open movement, we believe in the need of envisioning the internet as a free, open and participatory space. This philosophy sustains us as an affiliate...”
Anonymous

KEY FEATURES OF AN OPENNESS LEADER

The key features of an openness leader are described below and are based on characteristics that could be drawn or were consistently mentioned by the interviewed affiliates. It is important to highlight that the CC affiliates are comprised of a core group of people that are highly committed, creative, dedicated, dynamic and above all resourceful. These qualities are not easily found and in many other organizational contexts it takes years to develop. This human capital that CC has through its affiliates is well positioned (if provided with appropriate resources) to scale up.

- Strong communications skills:

*“it’s important to adapt and have the ability to be able to provide key information to different audiences that raises awareness on the topics [...] and to be able to provide this information even if they give me one hour or fifteen minutes.” **Anonymous***

- Collaboration:

*“...the ideal that we can all contribute and participate in the construction of open access to knowledge.” **Claudia Cristiani, co-public lead CC El Salvador***

- Activism:

*“They have to inspire the values (of openness) as an alternative way for a more sustainable, solidary, more accessible and a fairer society. [...] Another important feature is also being an activist...putting pressure so laws and policies that threaten access to public information and knowledge that is managed by the government and public institutions are modified.” **Paula Alvarez, CC El Salvador affiliates’ partner***

- Resourcefulness:

*“...a legal lead has to constantly be willing to be updated and have an incessant calling for learning and research [...] There are topics that aren’t included in the law school curriculum and therefore building that knowledge is a self-taught effort.” **Denis Campo, legal lead CC Costa Rica***

- Extremely high sense of self-motivation:

*“They need to be very responsible and insistent because social processes aren’t simple [...] Things can be slow but you can’t force these processes...” **Meilyn Garro, public lead CC Costa Rica***

There are also key skills that leaders of the open movement should have. For example, all the affiliates coincide that leaders should have technical knowledge and experience in this field. Basic understanding on licenses, copyright, human rights and cultural rights are key for a CC lead to be successful.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE MOVEMENT

There’s an overarching sense of accomplishment that was shared by all the Central America and Colombia affiliates which is Creative Commons’ ability to become a global social movement and network that transcends geographic borders, ideologies, language, technological and operational barriers.

“A big accomplishment is becoming a network, to be able to articulate the amount of people, despite limitation, communication problems, we’re not aware of what other affiliates are doing in other countries, we have multiple languages and despite that we have a global network. We have presence in many countries and even with context variations and different degrees of success, we’re all working towards the same goal” **Claudia Cristiani, co-public lead CC El Salvador**

The ability to become a social movement and vibrant network with limited resources is quite remarkable. However, the network is at a point where it needs to evolve and be better prepared to support the work that is carried out by valuable human capital it has acquired through its affiliates.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

At the global level HQ could reinforce sustainability of the affiliates by:

1. Facilitating systematic knowledge sharing among affiliates: establish an online platform that serves as a “one stop shop” that centralizes and provides an inventory of resources (i.e. CC guides) and experiences (i.e. documented activities) that affiliates can go to when they need information.
2. Facilitating active participation of members/teams in international discussions/conversations: language is a clear barrier to active participation that could be addressed by offering translation during those discussions and looking at different strategies to increase participation.
3. HQ engagement with affiliates: establish regular communication to encourage exchanges, participation and a deeper sense of connection to the global movement.
4. Establishing a package of knowledge transfer to newer affiliates: to ensure they have the expertise needed to start and sustain their initiatives and meet the technical knowledge that the use of the licenses require. Establishing and systematically using a set of agreed standards would enable the global movement to effectively design operational strategies, projects and advocacy efforts.
5. Addressing the need to establish a mechanism that can help fund initiatives or strategic needs affiliates have: the three affiliate organizations interviewed lack independent funds to carry out CC specific activities on a continuous basis and that ends up affecting their ability to reach a wider scale with their initiatives. This is probably the case for many other affiliates.

At the regional level:

1. Identifying key areas or specific agendas affiliates have expertise and/or they would like to work on in collaboration with others
2. Providing regular monitoring and support to younger affiliates on the use of licenses: newer affiliates such as CC El Salvador were not involved in efforts to translate licenses and expressed concerns regarding their lack of expertise in the topic.
3. Recognizing that there's a limited capacity for affiliates to grow and renovate once the affiliate team is established: affiliates like CC Colombia expressed they find it hard for people outside of *Karisma* to join them and would like to see CC Colombia develop its own identity.

At the affiliate level:

1. Recognizing they play an important role in maintaining open communication channels with HQ: successful communication goes both ways, affiliates need to proactively and periodically voice the challenges they face, their needs as well as their successes to HQ. If this is done on a regular basis then needs can be addressed in a timely manner.
2. Exploring ways to establish a mechanism of cooperation among the Latin American affiliates in which older and more experienced affiliates can support younger affiliates in capacity building to establish their agenda and train them on licensing topics or other areas as needed. However having clear guidance and buy in from HQ on what would be the core minimum standards of information for example would be key in order to establish consistency across the network.