

SER - FINAL REPORT
Executive Summary
July-August 2015

Since 2013, the government has approved a series of legislative packages with a view to revive the country's economy. These laws, however, have been condemned by indigenous organizations as violating indigenous peoples' rights to land and self-determination, through relaxing environmental management standards and thus undermining the thoroughness of Environmental Impact Assessments and monitoring.

With respect to consultation, following the adoption of the Law on Consultation and its regulations, 10 consultation processes have taken place. Except for the 6 consultations on hydrocarbon projects, the final consultation stages took months and even years. One example of this was the creation of the Maijuna Kichwa Regional Conservation Area, which began in 2013 and was just recently completed with the publication of Presidential Decree No 008-2015-MINAM. Also, developments in relation to consultations on Lot 192 are now called into question. As the concession process was coming to a close, the Ministry of Energy and Mines decided not to discuss further the 27 points raised by indigenous organizations, further straining tensions. The Federation of Indigenous Communities of Corrientes River (FECONACO) and the Indigenous Quechua Federation of the Pastaza River (FEDIQUEP) engaged in a peaceful protest occupying the lot's facilities, demanding respect for their rights and that the dialogue and consultation process be resumed.

As more prior consultation processes are being conducted, indigenous communities are gaining further understanding of how to use this mechanism. Women, however, are excluded from these processes as they have no representation in organizations. Only in two cases have women participated through national women's organizations (ONAMIAP and FEMUCARINAP), which are part of the Pacto de Unidad (Pact of Unity) and as such are a reference in terms of consultation. Local female organizations are not viewed or perceived as legitimate community representatives, which reduces their chances to participate in all stages of consultation processes.

The Office of Public Defense, in its Conflict Report 138, has identified 153 active conflicts in the country and 9 in the Region of Loreto, of which 6 are environmentally induced.

ACTIVITIES, ACHIEVEMENTS, CHALLENGES AND PROGRESS MADE

Result 1: Indigenous women who have developed their capacity participate in consultation, negotiation and conflict management processes.

One of the aims of the project was to facilitate indigenous women's access to information and knowledge that would enable them to overcome weaknesses in their capacity for dialogue in the public arena and participate in the dialogue and consultation processes taking place in their territories. In that regard, a group of indigenous women and men have gained in-depth knowledge of their right to prior consultation, which will help communities to address violations of their collective rights, through awareness of existing national and international legislation and instruments safeguarding their rights.

Indigenous women who have participated in training workshops have improved their self-perception and performance by gaining confidence in speaking and debating in public spaces. Opportunities to meet with different women also contributed greatly to developing their capacities, as they felt they were "able" to do things they thought women could not do, such as being an elected authority or conducting a meeting.

In the areas of intervention, during project implementation, no consultation or conflict negotiation process took place as was expected when the law on consultation was approved. However, it is highly important that female leaders know what these processes are about and how to participate so they are able to do so in the future.

In coordination with Perú Bosques and the Imiría Lake Regional Conservation Area Authority, a workshop on “Prior Consultation and Zoning of Imiría Lake” was conducted on July 11 and 12 in the community of Loreto (district of Masisea) and was attended by 20 women and 2 men. This workshop was the continuation of the May workshop. It was used to provide information on the importance of creating the Imiría Lake Regional Conservation Area and the implications of zoning, which is what the consultation is about.

Result 2: Indigenous women place their proposals on conflict and development on the local, regional and national public agendas.

Throughout the project, indigenous women have had the opportunity to participate in events where they could meet with other indigenous and peasant women, whose struggle is to defend mother earth. Participating in such - national and local - events enabled them to prioritize issues and to develop proposals aimed at addressing them.

Their participation in national events has led to the development of lines of action for land governance in a political context that poses threats to their territorial rights. Also, local meetings have enabled them to develop proposals on issues related to:

- Climate change
- Economic autonomy for indigenous women
- Addressing violence in their communities
- Health care and basic services for their communities
- Programs for indigenous adolescents from and in the communities
- Indigenous women’s participation and training
- Respect for our right to prior consultation

Public Forum

The Public Forum “Indigenous Women, our Concerns, our Proposals” was held in Pucallpa on August 6. It was attended by 36 participants (10 men and 26 women). Participating as commentators were: Manuel Cuentas Robles, Regional Government representative, Bertila Flores Romero (Unidad de Local de Focalización or Local Focus Unit) representing the Provincial Mayor of Coronel Portillo, Edilberta Amasifuen, Manager of the Municipal Office of Indigenous Affairs (OMAI) and Richard Ochabano, Provincial Councillor.

The Public Forum “Indigenous Women, our Concerns, our Proposals” was held in Yurimaguas on August 13. It was attended by 23 participants (9 men and 14 women). Three indigenous women from the project's group presented their key issues and proposals. Participating as commentators were: Jaqueline López Vásquez, Councillor for the Province of Alto Amazonas, Juan Tapayuri Yahuarcani, Manager of the Indigenous Peoples Bureau of the Alto Amazonas Management Branch Office and Victor Yarucagua Manihuari, Head of the Office of Indigenous Affairs of the Provincial Municipality.

In these spaces, women had the opportunity to present their issues and proposals in a number of areas, including health, education, political participation, etc. These proposals, which were developed during the meetings that were organized as part of the project, were also presented to local authorities and public officers so they can be used to guide their actions in communities.

Indigenous female reporters

Three (3) indigenous female reporters from Pucallpa were given the opportunity to participate in the 3rd Training Session on Communication, Democracy and Intercultural Interaction held in Lima from August 13 to 15.

In this period, the last issue of the Boletín Amazónico was published, with 14 news reports produced by 5 indigenous female and male reporters. An insert with the issues and proposals developed by indigenous women was also included. The newsletter was disseminated in three districts both in Pucallpa and in Alto Amazonas.

Project closing

A day and a half project closing meeting was held on August 6 and 7 in Pucallpa and on August 13 and 14 in Yurimaguas. The former was attended by 26 participants (21 women and 5 men) and the latter by 18 participants (12 women and 6 men).

Documentation

The project's experience has been documented with a view to capture lessons learned, recommendations and suggestions for future actions with indigenous women in the Amazon Region. A video on the project's experience has also been produced.

Result 3: Building institutional capacity in areas and topics that help ensure better management of this project and overall institutional activities.

The "Gender and Interculturality" Induction Manual for SER's technical team has been published. In terms of administrative support to the National Organization of Indigenous Andean and Amazonian Women of Peru (ONAMIAP), SER's administrative team conducted a financial assessment of the organization, making recommendations for improving its administration. Also, an Organization and Functions Manual was developed and the document on "cash management procedures" was finalized. SER's administrative team enrolled in courses on Excel and "VAT Withholding and Deductions".

CONCLUSION

Having indigenous staff in the project's areas of intervention is extremely important, not only to ensure that the information is provided in the languages spoken by participants, but also because they are familiar with local cultures, which helps create a positive intercultural environment.

In each area, a space was opened that allowed not only for training but also for organizational strengthening as it provided an opportunity to meet people from other communities, broadening the range of experience and knowledge sharing. The project has helped build the capacity not only of indigenous women but also of indigenous men, making it possible for a group of female and male leaders to participate in processes and advocate for their collective rights, breaking self-imposed barriers by taking pride in their identity. For example, Rumaldo Lancha, Chief (Apu) of the Community of Nuevo Triunfo (district of Santa Cruz) mentioned that the workshops had helped him "assert his language" (Shawi) as he used to be ashamed to speak it outside the community. Also, Ms. Madeleine Tomanguillo from the Community of Pampa Hermosa (district of Lagunas) not only has been improving her performance but she also spoke for the first time in her language: Chamicuro. Using audio-visual tools to show indigenous women's stories provides a basis for reflection but it also gives women other references and hope that they can redefine their personal goals. This experience made it possible to produce educational, printed and audiovisual material that can be used in other projects.

