

USAID/PERU LESSONS FROM THE EVIDENCE: ORGANIZATIONAL & GOVERNMENT CAPACITY STRENGTHENING

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This document presents key learning from USAID/Peru's efforts to strengthen the capacity of the Peruvian government and organizations at all levels across development sectors. Between 2019 and 2024, USAID/Peru has commissioned various studies across several development sectors and USAID initiatives under its portfolio. This document is a synthesis of evidence gathered from key relevant studies and it should not be considered representative of the entire USAID portfolio in Peru.

✓ **SPECIALIZED TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE BASED ON EXPRESSED STAKEHOLDER NEEDS IS GREATLY VALUED BY GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS.** Rather than provide generalized training, USAID/Peru works in close collaboration with relevant stakeholders of the Government of Peru (GoP) to identify capacity areas based on expressed need that Government stakeholders highly value. Areas that GoP officials and personnel agree are critical to improve their skills and competencies to be more effective in their service delivery include health, policy analysis, regulatory matters, and environmental compliance. Several evaluations across the USAID/Peru portfolio identified various examples of critical training needs for government officials related to administrative management, technical expertise (such as environmental mitigation and monitoring plans), government forms and procedures, and inter-institutional coordination.

“ The outcome of government capacity-building activities for identification, prosecution, and trial of cases of trafficking in persons, and development of public policies is evident in the adoption of knowledge and protocols, improved inter-institutional coordination, and support for the decentralization of interventions under the National Plan of Action Against Human Trafficking 2017–2021. While knowledge about the roles and responsibilities of each institution in addressing trafficking has improved,...inter-institutional coordination remains a challenge...the public sector is more interested in what it should do, than in the person/victim process itself. ... Nevertheless, given the ongoing personnel changes in public institutions and the current legal adjustments, capacity-building activities needed to be repeated multiple times

- Mid-Term Evaluation of Human Trafficking in the Peruvian Amazon

✓ **PROMOTING PEER-TO-PEER LEARNING PROVIDES VALUABLE OPPORTUNITIES FOR GOVERNMENT TO STRENGTHEN COORDINATION, COLLABORATION, AND CAPACITY.** Through structured interactions such as peer learning visits between different regions and designated regional technical advisors provided via USAID/Peru technical assistance, government officials gain invaluable insights into effective strategies and approaches implemented throughout the country. This not only enhances civil servant understanding of complex issues, but also fosters a sense of shared purpose and collaboration among relevant government entities. By witnessing successful practices firsthand, officials can adapt and apply these lessons to their own contexts, ultimately improving the efficacy and effectiveness of public service delivery and governance.

“ Peer learning visits were valuable in strengthening the participants' capacities by allowing them to observe successful experiences in the field. Additionally, the visits fostered the creation of committed teams and cooperation networks among peers. The opportunity to closely witness the work of teams that have successfully addressed challenges similar to those faced by visitors, provided a deeply enriching experience... A key takeaway from the visit was the need to involve other institutions, such as municipal governments and the Regional Education Directorates, for the effort to be effective.

- Study of USAID Support to Peru's Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic

✓ **TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND TRAINING CAPACITY BUILDING INITIATIVES THAT INCORPORATE ON-SITE DEMONSTRATIONS AND PRACTICAL SESSIONS ARE AMONG THE MOST VALUED BY PARTICIPANTS.** This is particularly true in cases related to environmental compliance and agricultural techniques where farmers and stakeholders emphasize the importance of hands-on learning experiences over theoretical training. Face to face interactions also establish strong relationships and build trust.

“ Direct, face-to-face technical assistance generates a virtuous circle: greater social ties, more knowledge, more trust, greater production and income. The active presence of the technical teams of the Zonal Offices for technical assistance to producers with field demonstration sessions tailored to specific production and association needs is highly valued by most of the families in the intervention areas because it generates greater knowledge and trust. This form of work is a good alternative to generate income and have a better quality of life.

- Mid-Term Evaluation of the Multiannual Operational Plan for DEVIDA Institutional Strengthening (PORI)

✓ **USAID/PERU EVALUATIONS AND STUDIES SHOW THAT COLLABORATION WITH VARIOUS EXTERNAL PARTNERS CAN FURTHER DEEPEN CAPACITY STRENGTHENING EFFORTS.** Collaboration with external partners, including international organizations, NGOs, private sector entities, and academic institutions facilitates knowledge exchange, resource mobilization, and the sharing of best practices to support government initiatives. The value of collaboration with external partners was particularly emphasized by stakeholders in the case of working with local governments.

✓ **CAPACITY STRENGTHENING EFFORTS SHOULD INCLUDE SUPPORTING GOVERNMENT ENTITIES AND ORGANIZATIONS IN STRATEGIC PLANNING AND THE IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC PLANS TO ENSURE ORGANIZATIONAL BUY-IN WHICH IS CRITICAL TO SUSTAINABILITY.** This may involve developing advocacy strategies, action plans, and roadmaps to guide decision making in addressing complex issues such as Indigenous rights, environmental management, and community development.

“ Within AIRR interventions, organizations developed tools such as advocacy strategies, plans, roadmaps, communication strategies, and others that allowed them to organize their actions and agendas with a strategic approach to advocacy. In many cases, these strategic tools were developed based on other AIRR studies and analyses. These efforts, to varying degrees in each country, have enabled Indigenous organizations to approach negotiation and advocacy spaces in a more articulate and strategic manner.

- Mid-Term Evaluation: Amazon Indigenous Rights and Resources (AIRR)

✓ **CAPACITY STRENGTHENING INITIATIVES MAY STRUGGLE TO ACHIEVE LASTING IMPACT IF THEY ARE NOT INTEGRATED INTO INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURES, POLICIES, PROCESSES, AND BUDGET.** Ensuring the sustainability and continuity of capacity building efforts beyond the duration of specific projects or programs is a common challenge. Turnover of municipal officials tasked with carrying on results remains a challenge for sustainability. Maintaining momentum, securing ongoing support, fostering ownership among stakeholders, and strengthening capacity to mobilize future funding are essential for sustaining capacity-strengthening gains over time.

“ Local governments that received technical assistance from FID (Fortalecimiento Institucional de DEVIDA – a USAID/Peru Activity) showed greater management capacities to turn to other financing sources...Local government officials received technical assistance from FID for the formulation and implementation of public investment projects with tools for monitoring and managing proposals when submitted to the various public bodies that finance such projects. Moreover, public officials’ capacities were strengthened in terms of the management and execution of investment projects, which require the fulfillment of goals and actions in which various instances of local government intervene in accordance with the established rules and the use of the Ministry of Economy and Finance contracting system

- Mid-Term Evaluation of the Institutional Strengthening of DEVIDA project (FID)

“ DEVIDA’s work, with support from FID’s municipal facilitator, is hampered by the turnover of municipal officials. An example is the case of the Provincial Municipality X, where there have been three different authorities (who are undergoing court proceedings or are in prison) in two and a half years of management. The last administration only took office at the beginning of the year, so some officials were not aware of all the activities carried out by DEVIDA with FID. In this municipality, unfortunately, only one of the former officials remained in office.

- Mid-Term Evaluation of the Institutional Strengthening of DEVIDA project (FID)

THE EVIDENCE

- Environmental Compliance Review, 2020
- Environmental Compliance Review, 2023
- Mid-Term Evaluation of Human Trafficking in the Peruvian Amazon, 2020
- Mid-Term Evaluation: Amazon Indigenous Rights and Resources (AIRR), 2023
- Mid-Term Evaluation of Peru’s Natural Infrastructure for Water Security Activity (NIWS), 2023
- Mid-Term Performance Evaluation of the Institutional Strengthening of DEVIDA project (FID), 2022
- Mid-Term Performance Evaluation of the Multiannual Operational Plan for DEVIDA Institutional Strengthening (PORI), 2022
- Peruvian Youth Participation and Civic Engagement Assessment, 2021
- Whole of Project Evaluation of Alternative Development Project, 2024
- Whole of Project Evaluation of Amazonia Verde Project, 2024

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