

USAID/PERU LESSONS FROM THE EVIDENCE:

DEMOCRATIC SYSTEMS



PHOTO: RPP, ANDINA

This document presents key learning from USAID/Peru's efforts to advance democratic systems. 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.

✓ **MEANINGFULLY ENGAGING CIVIL SOCIETY AND COMMUNITY BASED ORGANIZATIONS LEADS TO CHANGE.** Local Indigenous organizations supported by USAID/Peru Activities in the Amazon were deeply involved and took leading roles in various regional organizations to advocate and negotiate for their rights. USAID/Peru helped ensure that Indigenous organizations had a role in the management and use of territories and strengthened the capacities of Indigenous entrepreneurship that contributed to improve family income and women's participation. In another example, the National Commission for the Development of Life without Drugs (DEVIDA), with USAID/Peru's technical assistance, supported the development of Community Neighborhood Councils and worked with them to achieve community development plans. These plans gather citizen needs and priorities and present community development strategies to be submitted to municipal authorities.

✓ **GENERATING EVIDENCE FILLS KNOWLEDGE GAPS, INFORMS POLITICAL ADVOCACY, AND ESTABLISHES INSTITUTIONAL COMMITMENTS.** The USAID/Peru-supported Alternative Human and Social Capital Activity focused on generating evidence for advocacy and improved implementation of anti-trafficking strategies. A USAID/Peru evaluation showed that the evidence produced has guided political advocacy as well as private and public action. The evidence has helped to measure achievements, setbacks, and challenges. It has informed review of institutional commitments during government meetings at different levels, and has been used to produce training materials, handbooks, and other materials. Joint publications and other coordination activities between civil society and the government in the anti-human trafficking space have influenced public sector action, including investing public resources, such as developing capacity to effectively engage in communities where trafficking is prevalent. Involving citizen oversight committees in the design of awareness-raising strategies has led to the mobilization of various stakeholder groups in anti-trafficking campaigns. USAID/Peru evaluations also pointed to the detrimental effects of a lack of data in some cases, for example on trafficking and victims and regional property titling in public sector information management systems, which can create information gaps and reduced awareness of key issues.

“ Production of evidence has been important for regional, macro-regional, and border meetings, where information was reviewed to establish institutional commitments. The Bureau Reports, Alternative Reports, the Routes of Human Trafficking, Good and Bad Practices, Victim Testimonials, Profile of Traffickers, and others helped the public sector to consolidate dispersed information and analyze it in training events or with their peers in other regions. - Mid-Term Evaluation of Human Trafficking in the Peruvian Amazon

- ✓ **TARGETED TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO ENHANCE LOCAL GOVERNMENT CAPACITY AND ACTION.** USAID/Peru supported technical assistance, training, and the development of various materials specific to local contexts (such as guidance, brochures, and posters). This assistance has strengthened local governments' abilities to manage information systems, procurement and services, plan development projects, and improve institutional performance, including the development of Public Investment Projects by municipalities focused on developing local capacity (in areas such as protection services) to reduce human trafficking in communities where victims are recruited. Training and technical meetings among judges have promoted knowledge exchange and improved efficiencies in human trafficking cases. Technical assistance to municipalities in areas where DEVIDA has worked focused on planning, budgeting, monitoring, and procurement processes contributed to improved institutional performance.
- ✓ **RETENTION OF GOVERNMENT STAFF IS CRITICAL TO THE SUSTAINABILITY OF USAID/PERU SUPPORTED ACTIVITIES.** USAID/Peru evaluations showed that staff turnover in municipalities affected environmental compliance in tele-centers as well as reduced the effectiveness of DEVIDA's capacity strengthening activities. Likewise, staff turnover in ministries and front-line operators have hindered services to victims of human trafficking.
- ✓ **YOUTH AND MARGINALIZED GROUP INVOLVEMENT IN THE POLITICAL PROCESS.** Overall, youth lack incentives to meaningfully participate in the political process, including in organizations and associations. Political and citizen participation is mainly the purview of urban youth, due in part to different needs and their capacity to organize through social media. Political parties tend not to focus on attracting young people, and youth generally perceive that Peru's current political system does not represent them. Some evidence shows that this issue is exacerbated by a lack of awareness among youth with respect to civic engagement. A similar issue is prevalent among the LGBTQI+ population – some evidence showed that this population has a low level of engagement in civil society organizations.

THE EVIDENCE

- [Civil Society Engagement Assessment, 2021](#)
- [Environmental Compliance Review, 2020](#)
- [Environmental Compliance Review, 2023](#)
- [LGBTQI+ Population Assessment: Peru and Ecuador, 2023](#)
- [Mid-Term Evaluation of Human Trafficking in the Peruvian Amazon, 2020](#)
- [Mid-Term Evaluation: Amazon Indigenous Rights and Resources \(AIRR\), 2023](#)
- [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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