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Photo: Tania Vásquez, Instituto de Estudios Peruanos

ETHNOGRAPHY (MAY 2016)

DECISION-MAKING REGARDING THE CULTIVATION OF COCA

What factors motivate farmers to replant or not replant coca crops in post-eradication areas? How do different household members influence this decision?

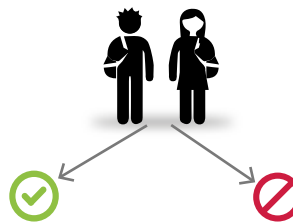
MAIN FINDINGS



- **The diverse nature of families impedes the application of a single recipe** for solving the problem of illegal coca cultivation.



- **The Alternative Development (AD) approach is long-term, while the decision to plant coca responds to short-term needs.** Generating results under AD activities is a function of a family's characteristics and economic needs.



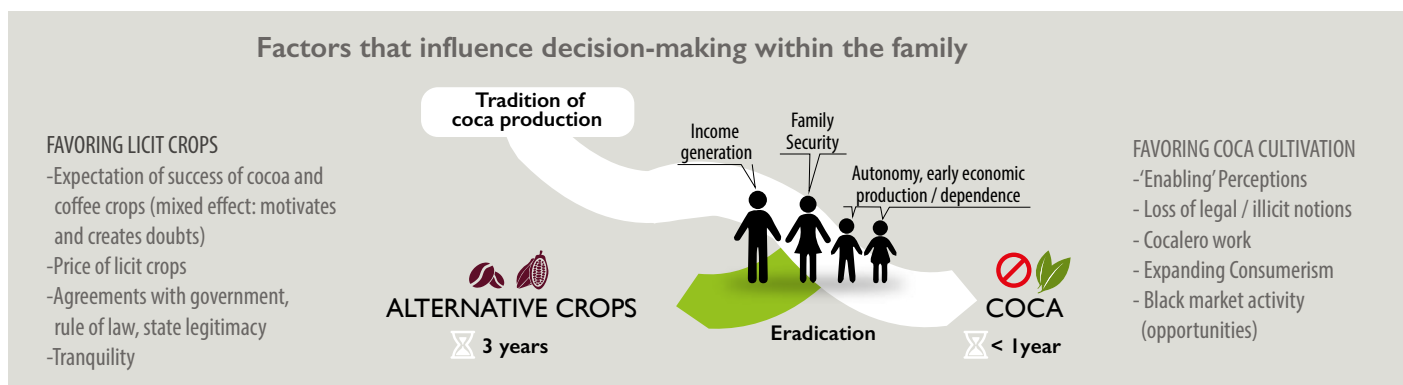
- **Some adolescents develop a proficiency in cultivating illicit coca at 13 and 14 years old.** This initiates their move towards economic autonomy. Their perception of coca's profitability influences their decision to sow it.



- **Women play a mixed role in deciding whether or not to plant coca,** and may be inclined to cultivate coca if their economic means are insufficient to sustain the family.

OTHER FINDINGS

- **The AD post-eradication strategy and results cannot be validated yet**, as cocoa and coffee installed in 2013 enter the production phase in the years 2017-2018.
- **As long as the yield of alternative crops is insufficient to support the family and the farmer does not perceive tangible results**, the risk of return to coca cultivation is high.
- **There is a feeling of “being defeated” in the population of newly eradicated areas**. Therefore, settlers sometimes perceive the situation as being one of “submission” rather than “inclusion”.
- There is some uncertainty among communities as to **whether the State will continue to support farmers once AD completes** the technical assistance phase and withdraws from post-eradication areas.



CONTEXT AND METHODOLOGY

The ethnographic studies were conducted in the communities of Agua Blanca and Río Espino in the district of Monzón, Huanuco, where eradication took place in 2013, and the community of Shanantía in the district of Padre Abad, Ucayali, where eradication took place in 2012.

In each community, three families were selected, including two AD participants and one non-participant. Researchers stayed for five weeks in each community.

The study was carried out during a critical period in which the crops (cocoa and coffee) supported by AD are in the initial production phase.



This document's contents are based on the “Ethnographic study of household decision-making and coca cultivation”, carried out in communities of Huánuco and Ucayali where DEVIDA implements alternative development programs.
The complete report is available at: <http://www.pgrd.org/> | http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/pa00mpd3.pdf (ES), http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/pa00mpcz.pdf (ES)

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