

**USAID/PERU LESSONS FROM THE EVIDENCE:****GENDER EQUALITY, INCLUSION,  
AND INDIGENOUS POPULATIONS**

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This document presents key learning from USAID/Peru's efforts to address gender equality, inclusion, and Indigenous populations. 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.

✓ **USAID'S AGRICULTURAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE INTERVENTIONS SPARKED A SURGE IN WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP AND DEDICATION, PROFOUNDLY TRANSFORMING THEIR ROLES AND AMPLIFYING THEIR INFLUENCE WITHIN THEIR COMMUNITIES.** Assessments such as the 2020 and 2023 Environmental Compliance Reviews revealed the unique connection women have concerning environmental measure compliances; i.e., women farmers are notably strict in complying with environmental regulations, largely driven by their association of environmental care with child and family protection. In certain instances, this commitment led to the formation of women-led patrols that enforced fines on those who litter, as well as active participation of women in cleaning and waste collection efforts within their communities. In other instances, women's involvement extended to them taking on leadership roles within their organizations, presiding over and leading initiatives that integrate environmental stewardship with agricultural productivity. Activities conducted under agriculture interventions, such as trainings provided by the USAID-supported Coffee Alliance, were instrumental in fostering a significant shift in women's abilities and relationships. Through these trainings, women gained the technical expertise needed to effectively manage plots and demonstrated improved agricultural as well as environmental practices, ultimately transforming household and community dynamics.

“ I see that women can very well, or even better than men, adopt environmental measures. They are more careful, and they are more concerned about their health; they are more concerned about their environment. I tell you this because women here now make up 50% (of the community), and as of last year the president of the cooperative was a woman - Cacao producer stakeholder in Ucayali, Environmental Compliance Review 2020

✓ **PRIVATE SECTOR INITIATIVES SYNERGIZED WITH EFFORTS TO EMPOWER WOMEN ECONOMICALLY, ENHANCING THEIR INVOLVEMENT IN DECISION-MAKING AND ELEVATING THEIR LEADERSHIP ROLES ACROSS VARIOUS FIELDS.** USAID/Peru activities contributed to promoting women's empowerment in various aspects of their lives, with the private sector assuming a sensitizing role with households by implementing new market trends and certifications that recognized gender equality in the workplace and encouraging women's participation in productive activities. Private sector partners carried out multiple activities (such as conducting workshops and training sessions to raise awareness about equal opportunities) to promote women's empowerment, enabling the greater involvement of women in decision-making processes and leadership spaces. By encouraging women's participation in productive activities, private sector partners have contributed to women's economic empowerment, which in turn, have improved their leadership roles and decision-making capacities within cooperatives, associations, and companies.

✔ **ENTREPRENEURSHIP HAS BEEN A CORNERSTONE IN SHAPING THE CONCEPT OF AN INDIGENOUS ECONOMY, WHILE SIMULTANEOUSLY FOSTERING EMPOWERMENT AND ACTIVE PARTICIPATION IN GOVERNANCE AND ADVOCACY EFFORTS.** Indigenous organizations assign an important role to entrepreneurship in the construction of a political discourse that links economic rights to the improvement of quality of life. The Mid-term Evaluation of the Amazon Regional Environmental Program activity (AIRR) highlighted the role of entrepreneurship in creating spaces for discussion and political discourse that defends the collective rights of Indigenous People. In governance, USAID provided Indigenous organizations with the opportunity to take a leading role as partners in decision-making by supporting consultative bodies like regional steering committees, national steering committees, and Indigenous economic committees. The acknowledgement of Indigenous People's organizations as "partners" and not simply as "beneficiaries" or "recipients" significantly enhanced their self-advocacy and leadership skills.

✔ **STRATEGICALLY INTEGRATING TRADITIONALLY MARGINALIZED GROUPS AS ACTIVE PARTICIPANTS CAN BE TRANSFORMATIVE IN OVERCOMING SOCIETAL CHALLENGES.**

Although progress has been made, the LGBTQI+ community in Peru still faces obstacles that impact their basic human rights such as lack of legal protection, discrimination and stigmatization, and fear of expression severely affects individuals' access to health, education, work, and political participation. The LGBTQI+ community is largely unprotected in exercising their rights due to the absence of inclusive policies. They face significant discrimination from families, the broader community, and authorities, and are afraid of expressing their gender identity due to fear of assault and losing social connections. Specific interventions for LGBTQI+ individuals and initiatives that involve local leadership contribute to advocacy actions that result in the adoption of proposals to help the community overcome barriers in society.

“ During the Lima municipal elections, LGBTIQ advocacy groups, through the Presente non-profit organization, led advocacy actions with proposals by people with disabilities, indigenous people, Afro-descendants, and women. Advocacy actions were performed in areas where alternative crops are grown, involving local organization leaders, farmers, schoolchildren, and young people. As a result, the mayor of Monzón adopted some of the proposals made by the young people and farmers during his term – Civil Society Engagement Assessment

## THE EVIDENCE

- 📖 [Civil Society Engagement Assessment, 2021](#)
- 📖 [Environmental Compliance Review, 2020](#)
- 📖 [Environmental Compliance Review, 2023](#)
- 📖 [Gender Analysis – Informing the 2020-2025 Peru CDCS, 2019](#)
- 📖 [Gender Analysis - Vulnerable Populations & Access to Public Services in Selected Areas, 2023](#)
- 📖 [Gender Analysis of Venezuelan Migrants, 2022](#)

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