

## USAID/PERU LESSONS FROM THE EVIDENCE:

# ADVANCING SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



PHOTO: USAID PERU

This document presents key learning from USAID/Peru's efforts to advance sustainable economic development. 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 STAKEHOLDER NEEDS LEADS TO IMPROVED PRODUCTIVITY.** Rather than providing generalized training, USAID/Peru works in close collaboration with relevant stakeholders to identify capacity areas based on needs. Across USAID/Peru evaluations, agricultural participants agreed that highly specialized training, coupled with citizen participation activities which generate trust among communities, allows for improvements in production, increased income, and sustainability.

“Of course there are improvements.... Although production takes time, we already have improvements, I even can save up something for my children's education, to make a living, to spend on certain things” (Producer). These achievements are in line with the boost given by the intervention to alternative production through a model that builds capacities among producers, organizations, and communities, within the framework of improvements in DEVIDA's approach and management in post-eradication areas and the support it receives from [the project]. - Mid-Term Performance Evaluation of the Institutional Strengthening of DEVIDA project (FID)

✓ **INCREASED ECONOMIC BENEFITS ARE INFLUENCED BY THE SCALE OF PRODUCTION AND FARMERS' MEMBERSHIP IN COOPERATIVES.** As revealed in the Whole of Project Evaluation of the Alternative Development Project, higher incomes and greater access to financing among farmers depend, to a certain extent, on their cooperative membership and scale of production. The average Peruvian farmer does not usually work through farmer associations or cooperatives. Thus, although farmers report improved incomes, the magnitude of these changes varies among farmer beneficiaries. For example, larger producers have benefited a greater extent from higher average incomes compared to farmers with small and medium production scales.

✓ **THE SUSTAINABILITY OF PROGRAM RESULTS RELY ON THE STRENGTHENED CAPACITY AND CONTINUED COMMITMENT OF PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS.** As noted in the Whole of Project Evaluation of the Alternative Development Project, as long as public institutions remain committed to alternative development objectives the program's results are likely to be sustained. Work with local governments requires the strengthening and development of technical, administrative/management, and technological capacities to improve the sustainability of the project's results, taking into consideration that municipalities have varying levels of baseline knowledge and skills.

“We have the SIMDEV [Monitoring & Evaluation System] that has been working with the support of USAID since 2011 - 2012. Part of the support has been the inclusion of improvements in the system and the automation of the process, operational issues, also in the generation of guidelines (...). Now we have a better execution” - DEVIDA central office representative, Whole of Project Evaluation of Alternative Development Project

✓ **GENDER DISPARITIES IN TRAINING AND THE ADOPTION OF AGRICULTURAL PRACTICES AMONG WOMEN REMAIN A CHALLENGE.** While there have been positive steps towards improving women's participation and access to resources in agricultural practices, significant challenges remain. Male farmers generally receive higher levels of training and are more likely to adopt agricultural practices compared to female farmers. Women's participation is notably low during the pre-harvest period. In addition, women have a reduced presence in associations, cooperatives, and farmer committees. However, there is an improvement in perception among large-scale producers, particularly in the Peru Coffee Alliance, indicating some positive impact of the Alliances' actions on promoting women's involvement in decision-making.

“ While more women are now participating in decision-making, the perception of their involvement in this aspect is still low. [Among small scale producers, few] believe that the interventions contributed to women actively participating in economic decision-making... However among large-scale producers, the perception of the Alliances' actions contributing to women's involvement in decision-making improves significantly ... The promotion of women's access to productive assets (participation in the value chain, access to credit, training and technical assistance, among others) allowed for a move towards equal conditions in various aspects of women's lives... [and] promoted their leadership and decision-making in the household, field, and community. - Final Performance Evaluation of Three Global Development Alliances (GDA) in Alternative Development

✓ **SUSTAINING REDUCTIONS IN ILLICIT COCA LEAF CULTIVATION REQUIRES AN INTEGRATED STRATEGY.** There are several factors that encourage illicit coca leaf cultivation which USAID/Peru Activities seek to address. To succeed, implementers must consider factors such as the extent of public and private sector existence, political will, local Rule of Law, and the limitations in the type of Public Investment Projects that local governments can implement. Implementers must also consider the high variability of prices of alternative crops, and the large number of small and individual producers needing ongoing support. This integrated strategy must be coordinated between alternative development, local development, interdiction, eradication, and security efforts. Displacement and adaptation of coca cultivation to previously unused areas, as well as farmers' permissibility of illicit coca leaf cultivation, should also be considered.

## THE EVIDENCE

- [Environmental Compliance Review, 2020](#)
- [Environmental Compliance Review, 2023](#)
- [Final Performance Evaluation of Three Global Development Alliances in Alternative Development, 2023](#)
- [Impact Evaluation Design & Baseline: Transforming the VRAEM: The Land of Fine Flavor Cacao, 2024](#)
- [Mid-Term Evaluation: Amazon Indigenous Rights and Resources \(AIRR\), 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](#)
- [Whole of Project Evaluation of Alternative Development Project, 2024](#)

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