

Land titles for indigenous communities in Peru



Starting point

The Peruvian Amazon region is home to more than 50 indigenous peoples living in almost 2,270 communities. Around 30% of these communities – 680 – still have no collective land titles (government data 3/2020). This legal uncertainty causes disputes over land, exploitation of natural resources and growing pressure on indigenous territories, as a result of infrastructure and industry projects and the influx of settlers from other parts of Peru. Over the decade until 2015, virtually no collective land titles were granted to indigenous communities. The reasons included a lack of clarity over responsibilities, inadequate capacity and budget limitations. The governing role for land titling was transferred back to the Ministry for Agrarian Development and Irrigation (MIDAGRI) in 2014, but regional government agencies remain in charge of the day-to-day implementation.

Project

From late 2015 until October 2021, German development cooperation – in coordination with other international actors – addressed the need for standardised databases, simpler procedures for granting titles, guidelines on the involvement of indigenous peoples and communities, and dispute resolution strategies, as well as capacity development and adequate budgets. The project supported the granting of land titles to indigenous communities in the Ucayali and San Martín regions and improvements in processes at national level. The participation of civil society, especially indigenous organizations, was strengthened. Finally, rights of indigenous women played an important role in all project activities.

Our objective:

Land titles, i.e. guaranteed access to land and natural resources, for 90 indigenous communities in the Peruvian Amazon region and improvements to the entire land title system.

Fields of action in Peru

- **Improvement of procedures:** the project advised MIDAGRI and regional agencies on drawing up and improving procedures for granting land titles. It also supported further development of the statutory framework for collective land rights, including procedures for preventing and mediating in land disputes.
- **Participation of civil society:** project activities strengthened the national- and regional-level participation of civil society, especially indige-

nous organizations, in granting land titles to indigenous communities.

- **Indigenous women:** all project activities focused particularly on the rights and concerns of indigenous women who play an important role in ensuring food security but are often disadvantaged in terms of access to land.

Land titles for indigenous communities in Peru

Budget and duration

EUR 6 million / November 2015 – October 2021

Lead executing agency and implementing partners

Ministry for Agrarian Development and Irrigation (MIDAGRI) / Agricultural authorities within both regional governments; indigenous organisations; occasionally NGOs

Commissioned by

German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)

Sustainable development



Two men and a woman surveying land

Example from the field (Situation October 2021)

Guaranteeing the land rights of indigenous peoples requires reliable cadastral information. When the project started in November 2015, cadastral information was only available in outdated Excel files (national level) and insufficiently organized physical files (regional level). To address this situation, the project applied a multilevel approach and supported its partners in the development and consolidation of two complementary digital cadastral systems. At the regional level, young indigenous professionals worked as project interns for 6-12 months in the systematization and digitalization of approx. 250 community files in both regions, starting in 2016. This initiative improved the technical skills and employability of these professionals. At the national level, MIDAGRI launched two digital cadastral systems in 2018, which had been developed with project support. The Cadastral System for Rural Properties (SICAR) is a modern tool for online rural cadastral data updating, which focuses on individual (usually non-indigenous) rural properties. Its main innovations are the interoperability with diverse governmental information systems (e.g. on natural protected areas, production forests, mining and oil concessions) and a public viewer to visualize individual rural properties, indigenous communities, concessions etc. The SICAR consolidates information registered by the 25 regional governments of Peru and is accessible to public users. The transparency it creates helps prevent land conflicts with indigenous communities.

The second system, called SIC-Comunidades (Cadastral System for Communities), for the first time provides information on peasant and native communities of the Andes and Amazon, respectively. It is an innovative web application (also with a map viewer) which allows to follow and monitor the - often lengthy - legal recognition and collective titling procedures. To protect indigenous rights, it can currently only be accessed by registered users, mainly the regional governments but also the indigenous umbrella organization. The work done by the indigenous interns since 2016 prepared the ground for consultancies to upload cadastral information on all (San Martín) or a large part (Ucayali) of native communities into the SIC-Comunidades, an important contribution to enhance their tenure security.



Before & after: Community Cadastral System

More information on <https://www.giz.de/responsiblelandpolicy> and [Land Portal](#)

Published by
Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale
Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH
Registered offices: Bonn and Eschborn, Germany
Rural Development, Agriculture (Department G500)
Friedrich-Ebert-Allee 36+40
53113 Bonn, Germany

T +49 (0) 228 44 60 - 3824
F +49 (0) 228 44 60 - 1766
www.giz.de

Contact:
Sondra Wentzel
sondra.wentzel@giz.de

Photos
© GIZ/Sondra Wentzel/Ronald Saucedo/María-José
Muñoz/Diego Pérez

GIZ is responsible for the content of this publication.

June 2023