



**MDE SAWETO PERÚ**  
MECANISMO DEDICADO ESPECÍFICO  
PARA PUEBLOS INDÍGENAS

# DGM SAWETO PERU A LIVING MEMORY



© Daniel Martínez-Quintanilla / WWF-Perú



AIDSESP



CONAP

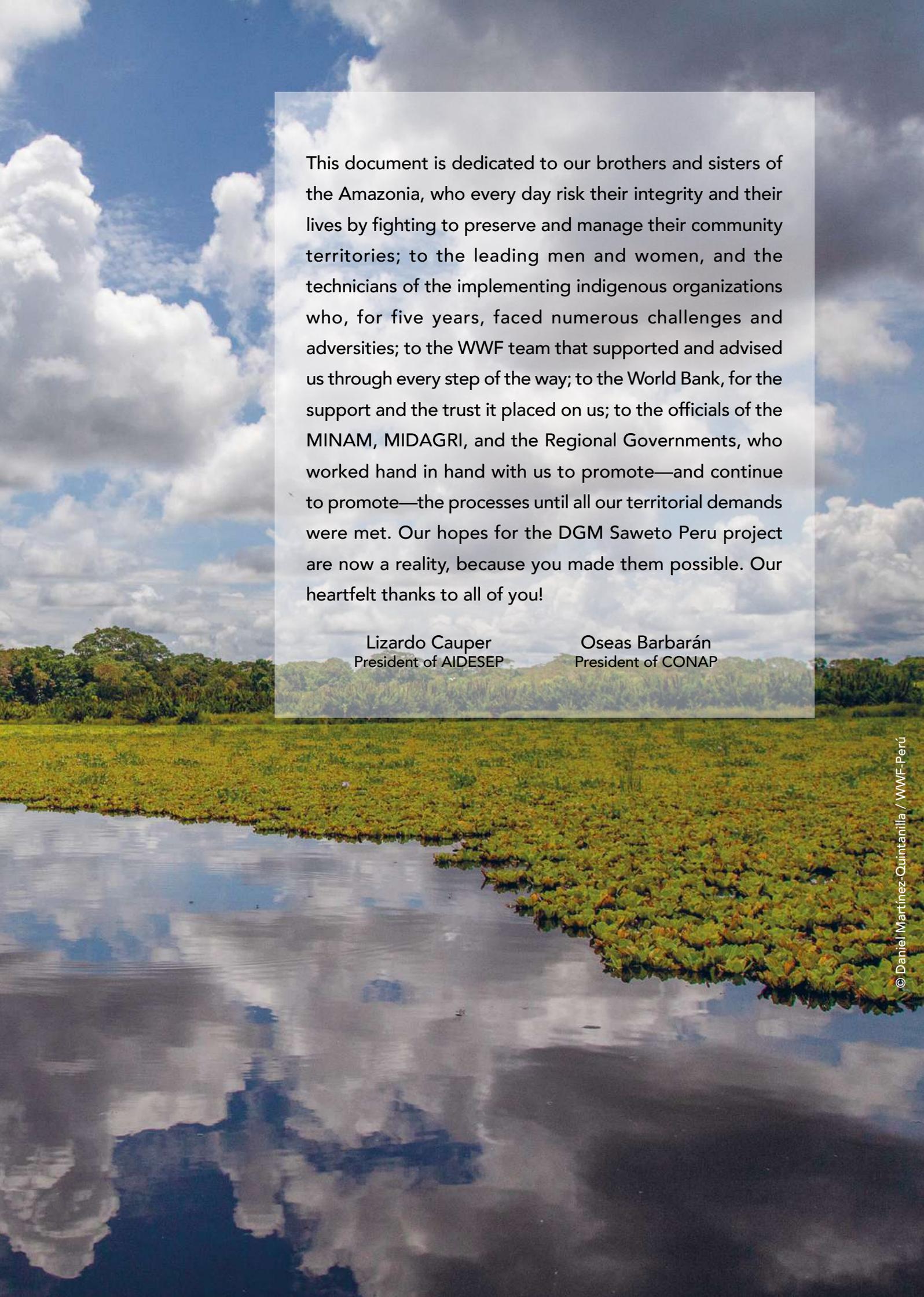


WORLD BANK GROUP



WWF





This document is dedicated to our brothers and sisters of the Amazonia, who every day risk their integrity and their lives by fighting to preserve and manage their community territories; to the leading men and women, and the technicians of the implementing indigenous organizations who, for five years, faced numerous challenges and adversities; to the WWF team that supported and advised us through every step of the way; to the World Bank, for the support and the trust it placed on us; to the officials of the MINAM, MIDAGRI, and the Regional Governments, who worked hand in hand with us to promote—and continue to promote—the processes until all our territorial demands were met. Our hopes for the DGM Saweto Peru project are now a reality, because you made them possible. Our heartfelt thanks to all of you!

Lizardo Cauper  
President of AIDSESEP

Oseas Barbarán  
President of CONAP

# CONTENTS

<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>FROM PROPOSAL TO IMPLEMENTATION</b>	<b>12</b>
THE NOVELTY OF INTERCULTURALITY	<b>19</b>
<b>TERRITORIAL RIGHTS</b>	<b>22</b>
INDIGENOUS SOLUTIONS	24
RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN INDIGENOUS PEOPLES AND THE FOREST	<b>27</b>
<i>PROCEDURE TO RECOGNIZE NATIVE COMMUNITIES: STAGES AND TERMS BASED ON THIS EXPERIENCE</i>	30
<i>PROCEDURE TO TITLE NATIVE COMMUNITIES: STAGES AND TERMS BASED ON THIS EXPERIENCE</i>	32
<b>FOOD SOVEREIGNTY AND INDIGENOUS PRODUCTIVITY</b>	<b>34</b>
VISION OF INDIGENOUS ENTREPRENEURSHIP: BEYOND COLOR ECONOMY	36
A CALL FOR AMAZONIAN INDIGENOUS ENTREPRENEURSHIPS FACING CLIMATE CHANGE THROUGH COMMUNITY FOREST STEWARDSHIP	40
FROM SUBSISTENCE TO COMPETITIVENESS	42
INDIGENOUS INNOVATION	44
THE VOICES OF THE ENTREPRENEURS	46
ENTREPRENEURIAL WOMEN AND MOTHERS	<b>48</b>
<b>INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES DURING THE PANDEMIC</b>	<b>52</b>
<b>GOVERNANCE: INDIGENOUS SELF-DETERMINATION IN ACTION</b>	<b>56</b>
<b>LESSONS LEARNED FROM DGM SAWETO:</b>	
<b>A TRAILBLAZING PROJECT</b>	<b>62</b>
EXECUTING INDIGENOUS ORGANIZATIONS	63
TITLING OF INDIGENOUS LANDS	65
ECONOMY AND INDIGENOUS ENTREPRENEURSHIPS	66
INDIGENOUS SELF-DETERMINATION	67
INDIGENOUS INNOVATION	68
PANDEMIC	<b>68</b>
<b>THIS IS NOT OVER</b>	<b>70</b>

# INTRODUCTION

---

**M**ost indigenous peoples around the world have a similar dream: to maintain their homes and livelihoods free of permanent threats. What may seem like the pursuit of an ideal, is their hope to exercise their human rights.

Since the beginning, indigenous peoples in Peru have fought to attain this goal and recognition, and the lives of several of their leaders were lost in this struggle. In 2014, four Asháninka leaders of the Saweto community were assassinated for defending their territory, their livelihood, their home. To honor them, together with the hundreds of indigenous peoples who lost their lives, and those who put their physical integrity at risk every day to defend the forests, the Amazon, and nature, this project was titled: DGM Saweto: A Living Memory.



In 2013, two Peruvian Amazonian indigenous organizations decided to join efforts to make this dream a reality: the Confederation of Amazonian Nationalities of Peru (CONAP) and the Interethnic Association for the Development of the Peruvian Rainforest (AIDASEP). This time around, they chose to speak to the Peruvian State and international cooperation agencies under their own terms, and to become executors, instead of remaining as beneficiaries.

The indigenous organizations were in charge of drafting the agenda and designing the project. The agenda's clearly stated items were not subject to negotiation, and included: registration of indigenous communities to obtain legal status, titling of indigenous lands, and development of sustainable productive activities for the communities.

Accordingly, in 2015, the agenda and the outline of DGM Saweto Peru were approved, and all the parties involved set out into a knowledge acquisition and learning process, including the indigenous organizations, the Peruvian State, the World Bank, WWF, and civil society organizations appointed for project management and technical assistance



After five years, the indigenous organizations moved forward in the process to recognize, register, and title their indigenous communities. During this time, the indigenous peoples' capacities were strengthened, and indigenous organizations worked closely with the government in line with the plans defined. Similarly, procedures were simplified—leading to a 90% reduction of the time necessary to recognize the indigenous communities—and, more importantly, several hurdles were overcome. In addition, almost one hundred indigenous communities saw improvements in the implementation of their productive chain.

DGM Saweto Perú benefitted more than 10 thousand indigenous families by providing legal security to over 230 thousand forest hectares that were under constant threat and are now formally in the hands of indigenous communities. Similarly, more than 250 indigenous communities titled with legal capacity were registered, and 119 indigenous communities received support for the sustainable development of their productive chains.

The impact was not limited to achieving the proposed goals; it brought a clear change to the approach used to work with indigenous peoples who—through their representative indigenous organizations—played a direct role in the design, management and execution of the processes in the field, following their own worldview and self-determination.

The process was not easy and it required overcoming several looming challenges, such as a State that has yet to reach maturity when it comes to its institutions, and which transitioned into four different presidential periods throughout the duration of the DGM Saweto Perú project, giving rise to impacts caused by the change of administration. Similarly, the turnover of public officials in Regional Governments and their offices was significant; there was a clear lack of capacity by government officials; cumbersome bureaucracy crippling the procedures to recognize and grant titles; a lack or insufficiency of regulatory development for recognition and titling processes; contradictory government policies that led to social conflict; constant threats to indigenous territories; and even a pandemic at the end of the project's execution period.



Nevertheless, when the currents became rough, we were able to pull through, and the final outcome of this project is more than satisfactory: through DGM Saweto Peru, the indigenous organizations of the Peruvian Amazon have proved that they can play a leading role as implementers and have set a precedent of how an executive role would be operated under indigenous governance and autonomy.

Moreover, as an intercultural experience, DGM Saweto Peru demonstrated that, in practice, true interculturality requires not only a diversity of stakeholders, but also evolving their roles and influence. The work developed by the Peruvian State, the indigenous organizations, the World Bank and WWF, was different from their usual methodology; through the effort made by each organization, they were able to learn from one another, adapt, and evolve. Now concluded, this experience allowed all participants to improve and grow stronger, paving the way for more projects of this kind.

Through DGM Saweto Peru's implementation we learned that recognizing an indigenous community requires a USD 3,000 investment covering on-site logistical expenses and hiring costs for brigades and government personnel. The process takes approximately 12 months. In turn, each indigenous land titling process requires an average of USD 12,000 covering on-site logistical expenses, and brigade members and government personnel costs. This process takes between 36 and 48 months in average.

Based on this data, the Peruvian State can calculate—and optimize—the budgets and timeframes necessary to tackle this critical

issue that has been owed to indigenous communities for such a long time.

One of the resulting and most evident changes is the project and fund management capabilities acquired and improved by the executing indigenous organizations. A fund of over USD 2.5 million was directly executed by 16 regional and local indigenous organizations throughout the five years of the project, with the participation of over 100 members of such organizations, including technical, administrative and management staff. There was permanent communication between these organizations and their beneficiary indigenous communities.

Therefore, the indigenous organizations' executing role, the prior negotiations, and the agenda submitted for this project constitute a milestone, both at the national and international level, signifying that indigenous organizations will not be passive beneficiaries of the development projects they take part, and instead will become the protagonists.



*"For the first time in history, indigenous peoples, together with our brothers of AIDSESP, have overseen a crucial five-year project for the benefit of our country's Amazonian indigenous communities. For us, the Confederation of Amazonian Nationalities of Peru (CONAP), this was a most rewarding and enriching experience. Indigenous governance was given due recognition."* **Oseas Barbarán, President of CONAP**



*"For us, this is an achievement as indigenous peoples. By coordinating with authorities, we ensured the titling of community lands. (...) Our communities place great importance in having ownership over their territory because their land is now secured. The families are safe in their communities and within their properties. They also appreciate the support we received when handling the proceedings and agreements, and they learned to form partnerships with the regional governments."* **Ruth Buendía, Asháninka Peoples, AIDSESP Secretary**

*One of the principal aspects to highlight in this project is, of course, its national impact, but also the impact made at the international level. (...) Indigenous organizations now aim for project appropriation from the onset; they try a different approach to work and interact with donors, and indigenous peoples show significant interest in being more visible during the decision-making process, to assume an active, as opposed to a passive, role in a process that might benefit them. This was key in this project."*

**Lucía Ruiz, former Minister of Environment of Peru**

*"This is an Amazonian project, a project conceived by indigenous organizations and indigenous peoples."*

**Kurt Holle – Executive Director of WWF Peru**

*"I believe this was a valuable experience for everyone involved, for the World Bank, the WWF and the indigenous organizations themselves. It was groundbreaking. (...) We learned numerous lessons, and, as one of the first experiences where indigenous communities were at the forefront of the project, not just as final beneficiaries, it was extremely compelling."* **Ana Luisa Gómez, the World Bank**

*"The work carried out was thought-provoking; we coordinated several matters with the communities. I really appreciated that indigenous communities were directly involved in the execution of this project. I am sad that this is over, although they made headway in several fronts. We will explore ways to keep pushing forward, and to compliment them, because they did a most formidable job."* **Helen Figueroa, DIGESPACR – Ministry of Agriculture**



## DGM SAWETO PERU PROJECT DESIGN

In the Peruvian case, the National Steering Committee was composed solely of indigenous organizations.

WWF was the civil society institution chosen through public tender to provide technical and administrative assistance, strengthen capacities, and facilitate the processes for project implementation.

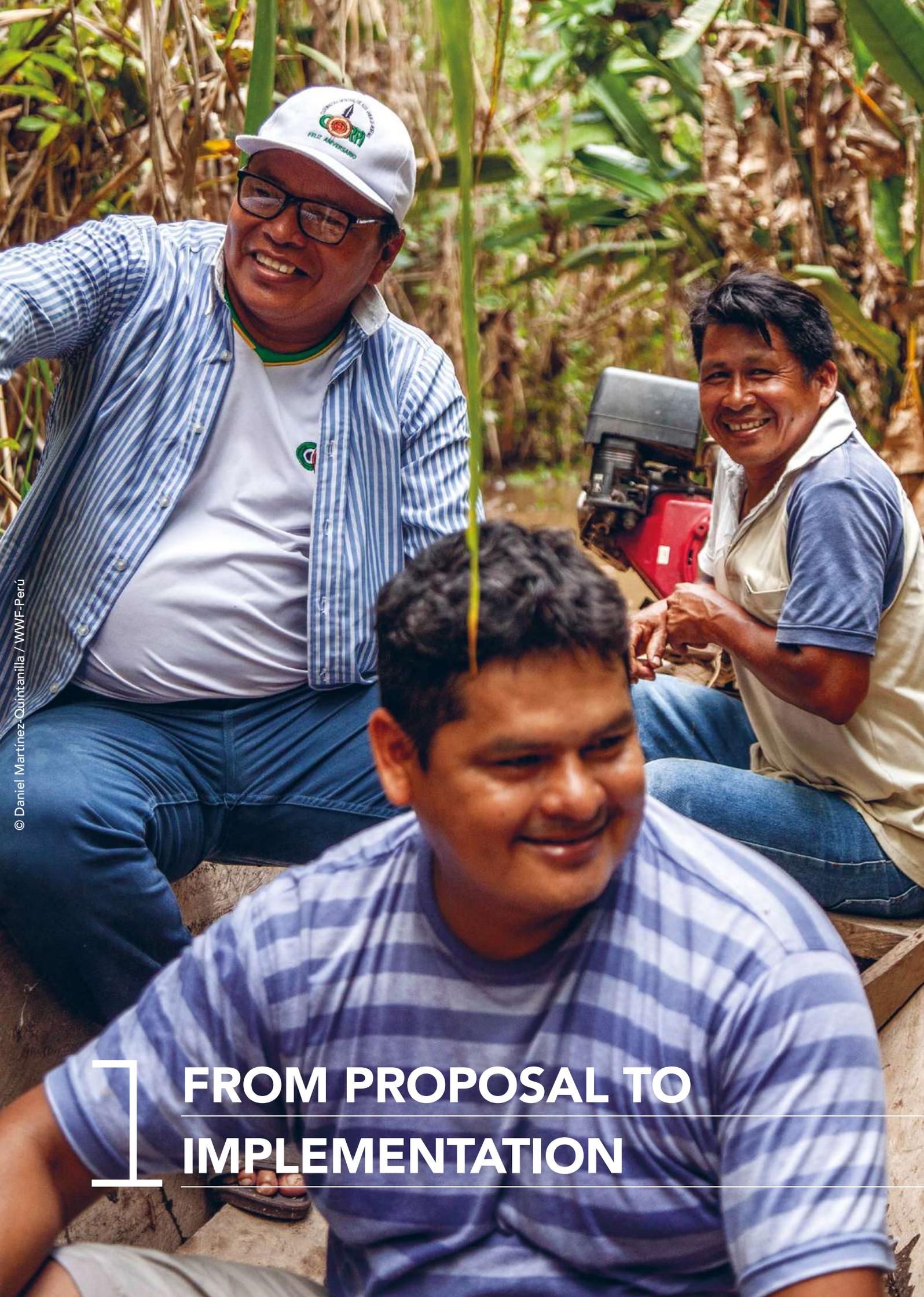
However, what made a difference was not the combination of parties, but rather the executing role played by the indigenous organizations.



## ARCHITECTURE IN OBTAINING FUNDS FOR THE DGM SAWETO PERU

The financing provided by the Dedicated Grant Mechanisms (DGMs) is the outcome of years of struggle by indigenous peoples around the world, who demanded that a portion of the World Bank's Forest Investment Programs (FIPs) should be aimed at indigenous peoples. The FIPs target developing countries and test different approaches to foster growth with low carbon emissions and adaptation to climate change. It is part of the Climate Investment Funds (CIF)

The application of DGMs shares a similar structure with the application of FIPs in 12 pilot countries, but, unlike the latter, it has a unique design tailored to each country's specific situation. In Peru's case, this fund was designed by the two largest local indigenous organizations in the Amazon, who represent over 2000 indigenous communities. The initiative shown by the indigenous organizations to demand an executing role and propose their own land titling agenda was unprecedented, and this project was regarded internationally as an exemplary case.



© Daniel Martínez-Quintanilla / WWF-Perú

# FROM PROPOSAL TO IMPLEMENTATION

*“A project that directly benefits indigenous communities in terms of recognition, titling of their lands and also some productive projects in which we have had direct participation, both CONAP and AIDSESP, in the planning, formulation, management of budgets and approval of projects. ”*

**Oseas Barbarán, President of CONAP**

In 2013, the indigenous peoples of Peru decided to switch strategies in their fight to secure their territory and maintain their homes and livelihoods. As part of this change, they replaced their protests with proposals, which became a promise made to their grassroots indigenous organizations, and, since then, they decided to play a leading role.

Accordingly, 2250 indigenous communities represented by two indigenous organizations, CONAP and AIDSESP, applied for the Dedicated Grant Mechanism for Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (DGM), a forest protection fund managed by the World Bank. Unlike projects in other countries that use this fund through a joint proposal by their national governments and the World Bank, the Peruvian indigenous movement decided to lead the project itself.

*The Peruvian case broke free from the notion that a national or international NGO had to come and design a project to be implemented with the support of the indigenous peoples and their organizations. In this case, the design and conceptualization originated from the indigenous peoples themselves, duly substantiated by additional technical support to complement the one carried out by their organizations. And this time—as it has been underscored repeatedly during the indigenous communities’ discourse—the NGOs provided support to the indigenous organizations, and not the other way around.”*

**Lucía Ruiz, former Vice Minister of Strategic Development of Natural Resources of the Ministry of Environment of Peru.**

To achieve this goal, the indigenous organizations agreed to prioritize their common interests and set their differences aside. The indigenous peoples represented by these two organizations, are part of 55 indigenous peoples registered to date in the Peruvian



© Daniel Martínez-Quintanilla / WWF-Perú

Amazon, whose cultures, languages, and governance vary. This was made possible thanks to a previous experience in Bagua in 2009, when Amazonian indigenous peoples came together to defend their territorial rights, organizing themselves to take over the leading position and assume an active responsibility in the exercise of their rights. CONAP and AIDSEP's priorities were reflected in the proposed agenda: 1) Registration of the indigenous communities' legal capacity; 2) Titling of indigenous communities' lands, and 3) Strengthening of the indigenous communities' productive processes.

The order of the priorities was not left to chance. It is not widely known in Peru that, although the rights of indigenous communities are recognized in the country, an administrative proceeding is necessary to exercise them, and the indigenous communities must be registered as legal persons. The titling of their territory cannot be started until this registration process is successfully completed. The strengthening of productive processes was included as a complementary aspect following the indigenous organizations' search for sustainable livelihoods and the improvement of their quality of life.

The well-accepted proposal was the onset of a mutual learning process, for the indigenous organizations, the World Bank, regional governments, WWF, and the Peruvian State.

Following the project's completion, the main point of agreement between all stakeholders was that this was an enriching process, where capacities were built, and part of the demands were met.

*I believe that, after these five years, this is what the indigenous organizations value the most: the strengthening of their capacities, being able to manage these resources directly, being responsible for such management, and, more importantly, demonstrating that they have this capacity, and building confidence on their organizations. This in turn led to the capacity to successfully execute the two main premises defined for this project: legal security through the recognition and titling of their communities, and community forest stewardship to better use natural resources to the benefit of their communities, who are the direct users of such resources in their day-to-day activities, and the ones who have first-hand, on-the-ground knowledge of their reality.”* **Marylen Puquio, CONAP.**



© Daniel Martínez-Quintanilla / WWF-Perú

Often, we fail to realize that the States' and the international community's operations play by rules that have not been disclosed to their citizens. This factor weighs particularly heavy in pluricultural States where insufficient infrastructure creates an impediment to access urban areas from rural areas

However, through DGM Saweto Peru, and by developing management, negotiation and consensus-building skills, the indigenous organizations of the country have gained knowledge on the workings of the State and international cooperation. Today, the organizations have improved their capacities to present their demands to the authorities, to prepare proposals, make plans hand in hand with the Government, manage processes, execute budgets, and prepare financial reports.

By doing so, indigenous organizations not only learned the rules of the game—they were also able to improve them. An example of this are the four legal regulations advocated by the indigenous peoples to simplify the



land titling procedure , and which, in coordination with the Peruvian State, have now become a reality.

With the support of WWF as the civil society organization selected to manage the fund, the indigenous organizations were able to strengthen their management capacities, and even determine and underscore the value of leaving the management of natural resources in the hands of indigenous communities. In fact, to apply to the fund, it was necessary to substantiate not only the forest component, but also the impact the project may have on mitigating climate change, which aimed at meeting the needs of the indigenous peoples based on the outcome of protecting the environment: if there is one shared belief among indigenous peoples around the world, it is that the environment must be preserved.

*“This project bears witness to the determination of indigenous peoples, and the fact that when Amazonian peoples set their mind on something, they become a single, unrelenting force.”*

Waldir Azaña (AIDSESP) and Marylen Puquio (CONAP)  
quoting Alberto Pizango, former AIDSESP director.

This is the same force that allowed them to overcome several challenges throughout this five-year period, which went on to become a unique hands-on learning experience.

Today, the Amazonian indigenous organizations of Peru have strengthened capacities covering management and operational aspects, accountability, directive and investment activities, personnel hiring, observance of deadlines and proper use of formats required by the international cooperation.

## MDE SAWETO: 4 FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES

The project highlighted four fundamental principles



“This project leaves extensive experience as its legacy and not only for indigenous organizations. Civil society and even Government organizations can learn how work is done on the ground with, and with the cooperation of, the indigenous movement. Indigenous peoples should not be seen as mere beneficiaries anymore, but rather as partners in these processes, and they should be regarded as the true protagonists.” **Cynthia Mongylardi, WWF Peru.**

## DGM SAWETO’S AREA OF IMPACT

E 1 / AREA OF IMPACT



FIGURE 2 / BENEFICIARIES PER GENDER

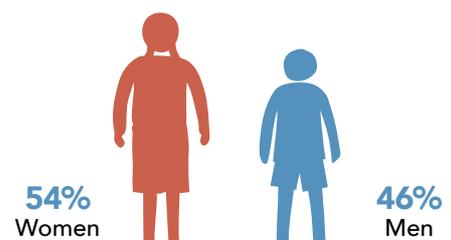


FIGURE 3 / BENEFICIARIES

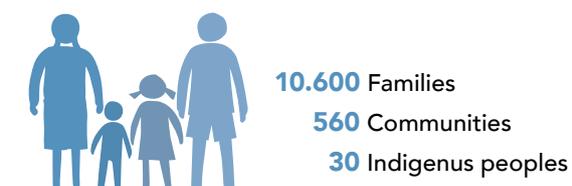


TABLE 1 / INDIGENOUS PEOPLES INVOLVED

Achuar	Bora	Kandoshi	Quechua	Wampis
Arawak	Chapra	Kichwa	Secoya	Murui-Muinan
Ashaninka	Ese Eja	Kukama Kukamiria	Shawi	Yahua
Asheninka	Harakmbut	Ilakwash	Shipibo - Konibo	Yanasha
Atsiri	Huitoto	Matsigenka	Shiwilu	Yine
Awajún	Jibaro	Nomatsigenga	Ticuna	



© Daniel Martínez-Quintanilla / WWF-Perú

## THE NOVELTY OF INTERCULTURALITY

The representatives of indigenous organizations, the Peruvian State, the World Bank and WWF Peru consider that the Saweto Peru project experience has been innovative.

What was novel for indigenous organizations was that they improved their capacities and strategies to negotiate with the National and Regional Governments and take on a leadership and executing role in a project, developing the necessary management skills along the way. This was not limited to capacity-building—they needed to use a language and logic that were different to what they were used to. Moreover, when their role as beneficiaries became an executing role, they had to undertake a responsibility over the full exercise of their rights. This required a change of mentality, and learning the language and logic of international cooperation, to pursue titling rights and territorial security on even ground.

*“It was both novel and difficult; we were able to negotiate and break some barriers set up by the Bank. We held two crucial meetings with representatives, and the indigenous leaders carried the voice of their peoples with them and explained their approach to this project. This was the first step toward strengthening the capacities of indigenous organizations and communities. They took on a more prominent role and defined how they wanted this project to become a reality.”* **Marylen Puquio, CONAP.**



© Daniel Martínez-Quintanilla / WWF-Perú

About the unprecedented position faced by the State, they had to accommodate the executing role of the indigenous organizations and address a complex project that involved different levels of interaction with the State and the organizations.

*"This was an emblematic and challenging project for all of us, due to its significant size. It combined decision-making by the indigenous organizations, and observing the principles of sovereignty, self-determination, and indigenous peoples' participation. Without a doubt, the indigenous movement has been empowered by this project in its position with the government."*

**Lucía Ruiz, former Minister of the Environment of Peru**

For WWF, the main difference lied in making private investment and international cooperation timeframes and formats fit together with the demands of indigenous organizations and the State's process cycles, including their corresponding dynamics and bureaucracy.

*"Timeframes are a daunting challenge for those who do not participate in private investment and public investment in technical cooperation. It could be said that the deadlines in these fields are set in stone—they are unchangeable. This reality clashed with the Amazonian reality, but neither is better than the other. They simply posed a challenge where those timeframes had to reach the same dimension and scale. This was both a challenge and a lesson learned."* **Kurt Holle, Director of WWF Peru.**

For the World Bank, the indigenous organizations' agenda and negotiation capacity was the difference that set this project apart from other similar projects at the international level. Indigenous organizations defined a clear, non-negotiable agenda, which initially took everyone by surprise, because land titling had never been considered as part of a DGM in the past.

*"This was novel because we are used to working with governments and institutions that are already aware of our standards and processes. The DGM is completely different. We had to work closely with the National Executing Agency and the indigenous organizations, teaching them how the World Bank works. For example, the topics of accountability, or how to apply our environmental and social safeguard policies had to be covered. I believe this was an enriching experience for everyone involved."* **Ana Luisa Gomes, World Bank**

In other words, the "innovation" brought about by DGM Saweto Peru was, in practice, the experience of working on an intercultural project. That is, changing roles, disrupting the way in which this kind of projects were traditionally executed. This resulted in all stakeholders having to face a formidable challenge that, at the end of the experience, translated into a mutually enriching process, where each party had to learn from the other to bring the project forward.





# 2 TERRITORIAL RIGHTS

*"Deforestation rates in Latin America and the Caribbean are significantly lower in indigenous and tribal territories where governments have formally recognized collective land rights."*

**FAO Report , 2021**

**H**aving a rooftop over their heads was never a concern for indigenous communities. For hundreds of years, they built their homes and carried out their livelihoods using their environment, at the same time preserving it and protecting it. Regardless of this, their sleep was not peaceful, and they were unable to fight off some permanently looming threats. For this reason, the indigenous communities of the Peruvian Amazon yearn above all for titles over their lands, a right that is recognized in Peru, but that has not been exercised due to bureaucratic hurdles and a lack of political will.

This was the main pillar of the agenda brought to the table by DGM Saweto Peru during conversations with the World Bank, the civil society, and the Peruvian State. This came as a surprise to the World Bank, as this goal had never been defined for this type of fund. However, the substantiation by CONAP and AIDSESEP was clear: indigenous communities protect the environment, but they cannot protect what is not formally theirs, even though they have a right over it.

*"Several challenges must be overcome if indigenous peoples are to obtain tenure over their lands. The system itself isolates the indigenous peoples, and fails to take into account our collective nature."* **Ruth Buendía, CONAP.**

In fact, at the start of execution of the DGM Saweto Peru project, the indigenous organizations found several obstacles affecting the land titling process, but they were able to overcome them and improved on the lessons learned in the past.

The problem was addressed from a new approach made possible by the economic resources and required technical assistance that were available this time around, and by the project's National Steering

Committee that fostered permanent dialogue and cooperation between the stakeholders.

During the process, the indigenous organizations have tackled the bureaucratic obstacles in a proactive manner, implementing solutions to unblock bottlenecks.

## INDIGENOUS SOLUTIONS

BOTTLENECKS	SOLUTIONS BY INDIGENOUS ORGANIZATIONS
Inexistence of legitimate interest by Regional Governments to conduct recognition and titling processes, either due to lack of budget, personnel or agenda.	Agreements and partnerships with Regional Governments, quantifying and underscoring the value of the political capital found in the titling of lands and communities. The parties defined specific plans and work schedules. Indigenous organizations offered— with the support of the project—to finance the on-site logistics, hiring brigade members, and coordinating capacity-building with the Ministry of Agriculture..
Absent, scattered and bureaucratic legislation to recognize indigenous communities and titling of indigenous lands.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Simplification of indigenous titling processes based on collaboration with legal initiatives:</li> <li>• “Guidelines for Recognition of Native Communities” ;</li> <li>• Guidelines for agrological land assessment and use classification ;</li> <li>• Two fieldwork guides and protocols on indigenous communities’ recognition and titling ;</li> <li>• Execution of the Resizing Procedure for Permanent Production Forests .</li> </ul>
Lack of State resources to implement the on-site logistics necessary for recognition and titling processes.	Through the project, the indigenous organizations funded on-site logistics, hired insurance for the personnel and brigade members, purchased field equipment, and hired consultants to provide support to Agricultural Regional Bureaus.
Constant turnover of public officials in National and Regional Governments, Regional Agriculture Bureaus.	Permanent dialogue to keep the new Government officials informed about the processes, generation of synergies and commitments.
Lack of brigade members’ capacities on on-site regulations and procedures during recognition and titling processes.	Permanent strengthening of capacities through workshops and meetings with brigade members, raising their awareness on regulations. Indigenous organizations coordinated with the MIDAGRI, entrusting it with the task of training the participants in the different regions.

Approved in 2016 (RM-N° 0435-2016-MINAGRI as amended by RM-N° 0589-2017-MINAGRI). Guidelines for the execution of the agrological assessment of native communities’ lands and their classification per principal use capacity at group level, with titling purposes, approved in 2017 (RM-N° 0194-2017-MINAGRI).

Operation of the new “Cadastral System for Rural Properties – SICAR”, creation of the “Cadastral System for Peasant and Indigenous Communities – ISC Communities”, and User Manuals – RM 0362-2018-MIANGRI. Execution of the Resizing Procedure for Permanent Production Forests — RM 0368-2018-MINAGRI.

When CONAP and AIDSESP started the execution of the DGM Saweto Peru, they already had experience in backstopping titling processes, and of course they had always come across bureaucratic, economic and political hurdles. However, tackling those obstacles from an executing position allowed them to have more resources—both economic and technical—at their disposal, with WWF’s technical and legal advice and accompaniment. This facilitated the search for a solution and the launch of alternative actions to overcome these challenges.

*“There has never been a unified procedure in our country. Although a law was in place, regulations on this matter were scattered about. This project disclosed and simplified the recognition phase. Previously, it took two or three years to recognize an indigenous community. In DGM Saweto Peru, this was achieved in less than a month because we simplified one recognition regulation.”* **Waldir, AIDSESP**

During the process, the project had to deal with the complex architecture of a State that is still in the process of strengthening its institutionality and governability. It had to weather several changes of government officials and presidents, and confusing and overly bureaucratic land titling systems and legislation. Moreover, agreements had to be reached concerning the demarcation between indigenous communities, and the demarcation of natural protected areas, as, according to the Peruvian legislation, indigenous titling rights cannot be exercised within territories defined as such.



© Daniel Martínez-Quintanilla / WWF-Perú

## RIGHTS DO NOT COME FOR FREE: A BUDGET TO MAKE THE EXERCISE OF RIGHTS VIABLE

One of the hardships initially faced by the project was the Peruvian State's assertion that the execution of these processes had no cost for the communities, that is, no payment from the indigenous peoples was needed for the recognition and titling of their lands, and the full exercise of their rights.

However, there are communities that have fought for formal recognition for more than 20 years, and this fight demanded time, effort, and even their lives.

Following the implementation of DGM Saweto Peru, the cost of these processes is now known, and the State should prepare a budget for such pending issue. To date, most titling processes have been achieved through the international cooperation's investment.

Thankfully, after five years of coordination with the Peruvian State concerning matters related to the titling of lands of Amazonian indigenous communities, there is now concrete proof that a budget plan to cover the cost of indigenous land titling is needed, and the consequences of failing to plan accordingly have been presented.



*"We have hit the wall several times, particularly during the titling process, and it was extremely exhausting and discouraging, especially when facing Government officials who believe that granting a title to a native community entails no cost, but, in practice, it means being forgotten for 20, 30 or 60 years. The social cost is extremely high, and it gives rise to conflicts that these communities need to face all the time, such as illegal logging, migration, land trafficking, or drug trafficking. These threats are contained by the community landholders, at the expense of their physical integrity or even their lives. This proves without question that the cost of titling a community is not zero."* **Cinthia Mongylardi, WWF Peru.**

For the abovementioned reasons, although the number of titled indigenous lands is lower than the one expected at the start of the project, the number of titled indigenous communities, titled indigenous lands, and lands currently undergoing the titling process, already exceeds the number achieved by the State prior to this project.

Furthermore, DGM Saweto Peru enabled the implementation of a novel approach wherein indigenous organizations seek solutions, facing each challenge aware that they are responsible for doing so. This attitude and this approach represent not only the strengthening of the capacities of indigenous organizations, but also their new capital.

## **RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN INDIGENOUS PEOPLES AND THE FOREST**

For Amazonian indigenous peoples, the concept of home goes beyond the walls of their houses, and encompasses the forest that shelters and feeds them. This relationship with the environment is different from the one known in the cities. This special connection to the space where they carry out their livelihoods is an ancestral legacy, passed down through generations for thousands of years, and it is because of this special bond that indigenous peoples are the best guardians of the environment.

*The Inter-American Court of Human Rights recognizes the unique relationship between Amazonian peoples and their territories: “The unique relationship between indigenous and tribal peoples and their territories has been broadly recognized in international human rights law. Article 21 of the American Convention and Article 23 of the American Declaration protect this close bond with the land, as well as with the natural resources of the ancestral territories, a bond of fundamental importance for the enjoyment of other human rights of indigenous and tribal peoples. As reaffirmed by the IACHR and the Inter-American Court, preserving the particular connection between indigenous communities and their lands and resources is linked to these peoples’ very existence and thus “warrants special measures of protection.” The Inter-American Court has insisted that ‘States must respect the special relationship that members of indigenous and tribal peoples have with their territory in a way that guarantees their social, cultural, and economic survival.’*

It is for this reason that the fight of indigenous organizations goes beyond the concept of ownership; it is the exercise of their individual and collective rights, which include not only cultural, but also social, economic and human aspects.

At the end of the project, 58 indigenous communities had obtained legal security (title), out of which, 38 have been registered. Other 109 communities have started their titling processes. The area of the 58 communities already demarcated and titled thanks to DGM Saweto Peru totals 230,239 hectares of forest.

This was possible thanks to the advocacy of indigenous organizations, and the joint and sustained work with the Peruvian State, WWF and the World Bank. However, there is still much to do with regard to titling of indigenous lands. A path has been opened, processes have been simplified, capacities strengthened, but, regardless of this, the Amazonian indigenous organizations of Peru have undertaken the responsibility and now carry the expectations of thousands of Amazonian indigenous families that still live in homes that are under constant threat.

*“The recognition and titling activities will continue, but some of these activities need economic resources for follow-up and sustainability. Resources are necessary to secure the smooth performance of these activities.”* **Marylen Puquio, CONAP**





*“When we embarked on this challenge to achieve territorial security, a diagnosis was made. Until then, the Government had fewer than 600 titled indigenous communities. Since then, the Government had only supported over 142 indigenous communities, and after the analysis, the 532 titles were granted with external support. This is where our challenge as an organization lies; we must secure the territory of indigenous communities. That is why we will not abandon this fight, and we will bring this process forward.”* **Waldir, AIDSESP**

## THE INDEGENOUS COMMUNITIES’ RIGHT OVER THE LAND: THE RIGHT TO A HOME

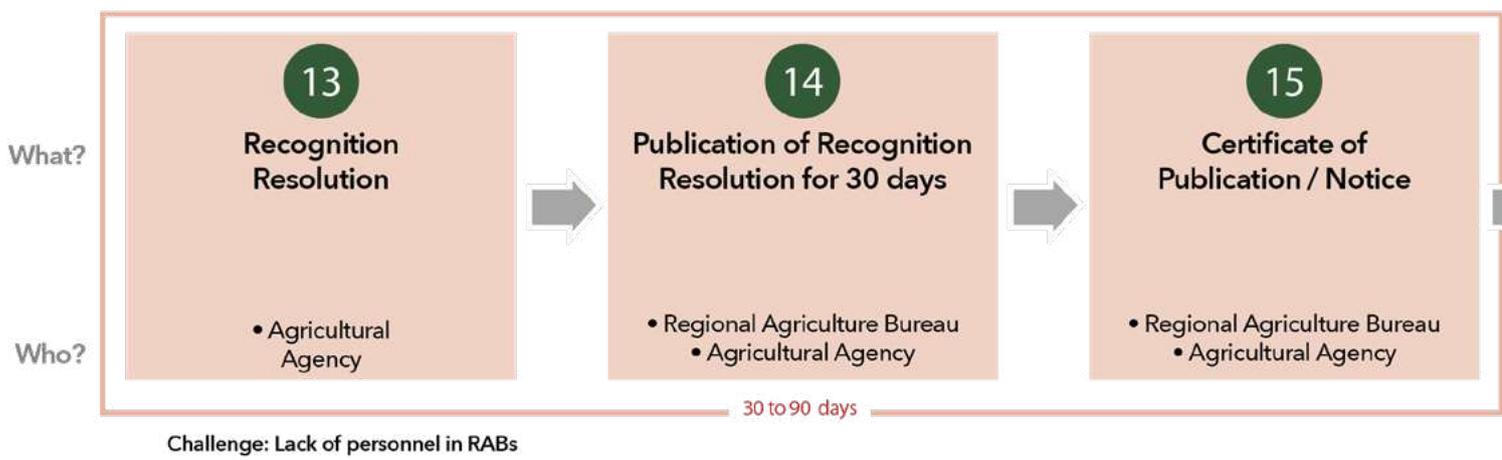
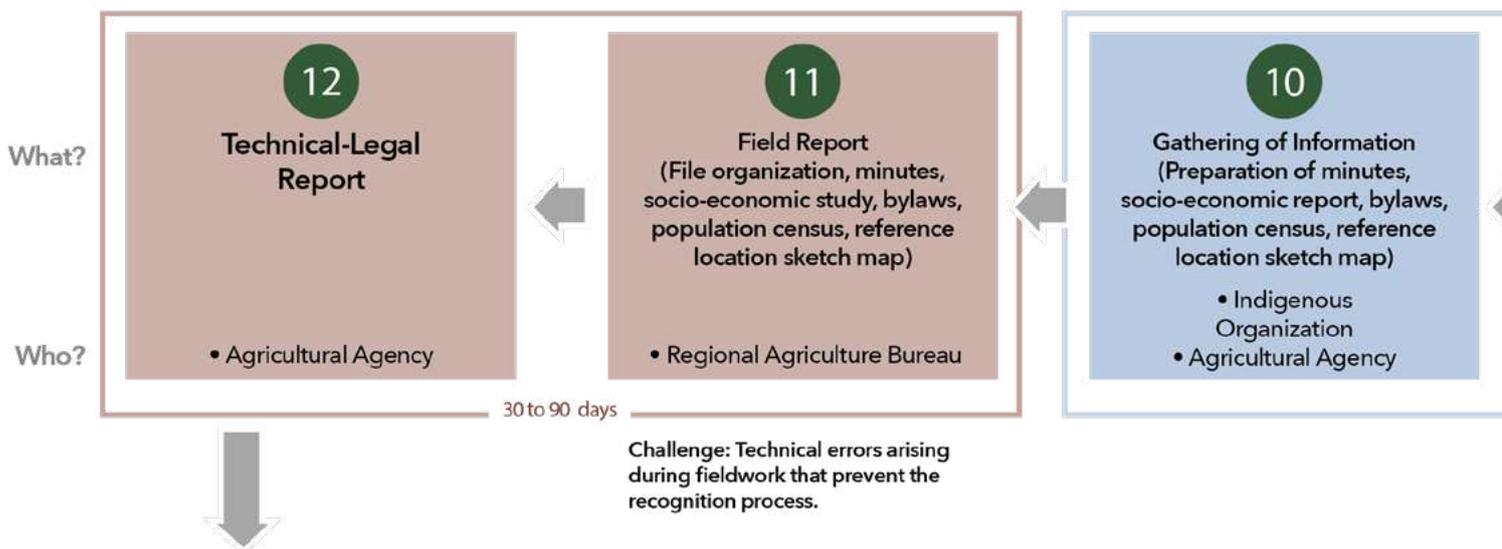
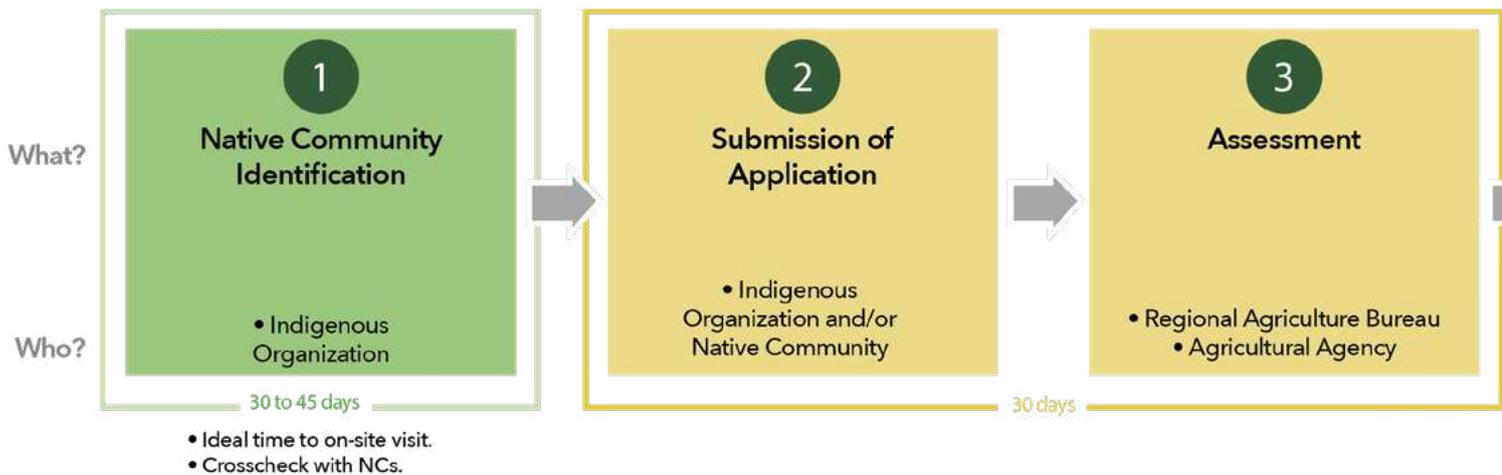
The indigenous territorial right is defined by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 69 of the ILO, the Peruvian Constitution and several regulations, including Decree Law N° 22175.

The titling of lands of indigenous communities is a right recognized under Article 89 of the Constitution: “Peasant and Native Communities have legal status and are legal persons. They are autonomous in their organization, community work and the use and free availability of their land, as well as in their economic and administrative aspects, within the framework set forth by law.”

Moreover, Decree Law N° 22175, Law on Native Communities and Agricultural Development of the Forest and Upper Forest Regions, stipulates that the State has the responsibility of granting a series of benefits and recognizing the rights of Amazonian indigenous communities of Peru.

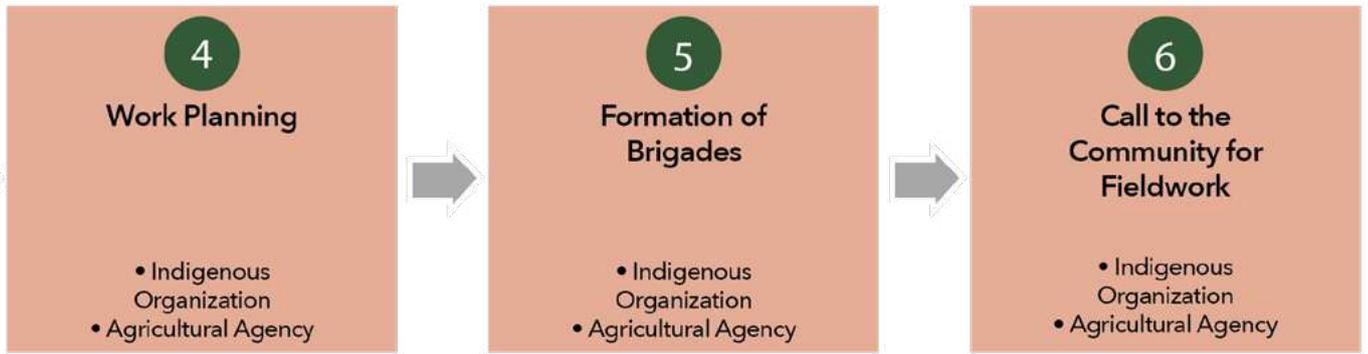
# Procedure to Recognize Native Communities: Stages and Terms based on this Experience

(Within the framework of RM N° 0435-2016-MINAGRI as amended by RM N° 0589-2016-MINAGRI)



Monitoring by the Indigenous Organization (compliance with s... grievances throughout the procedure, indige...)

Source: DGM Saweto: A Living Memory



Challenge: Agricultural Agency plans the work in accordance with their workload, activities adapt to the Agricultural Agency's workload.

Challenge: Agricultural Agency lacks enough trained personnel.



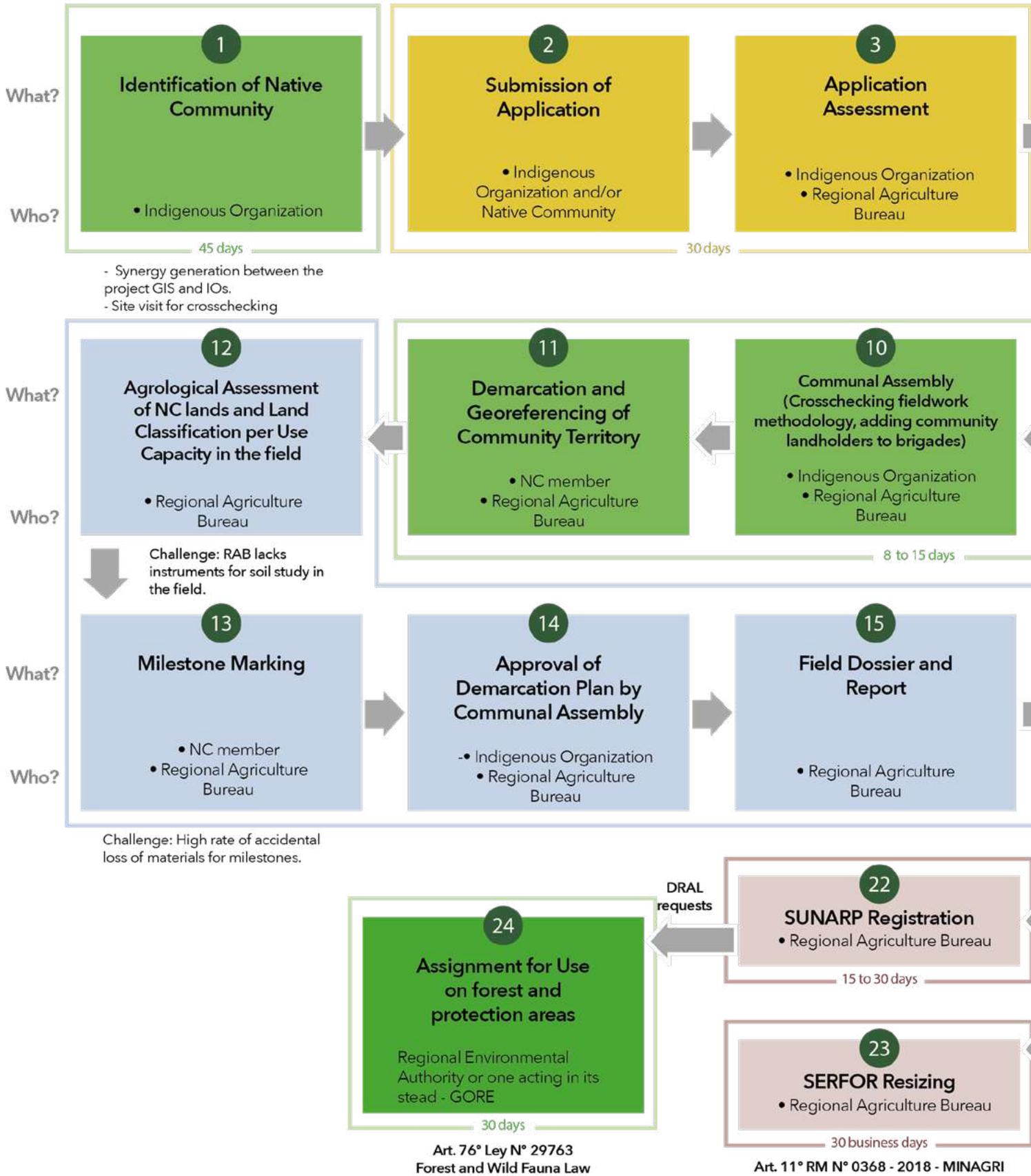
30 to 80 days



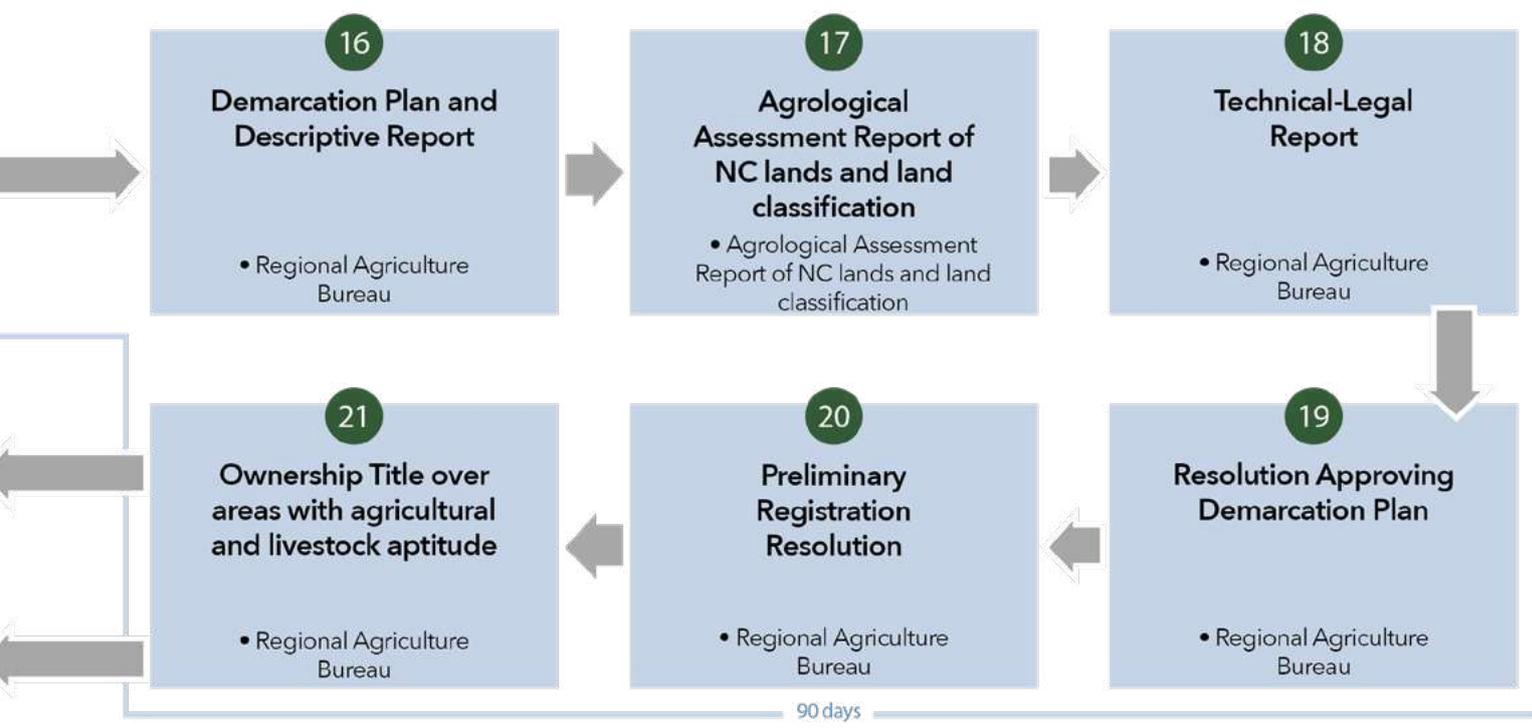
30 days

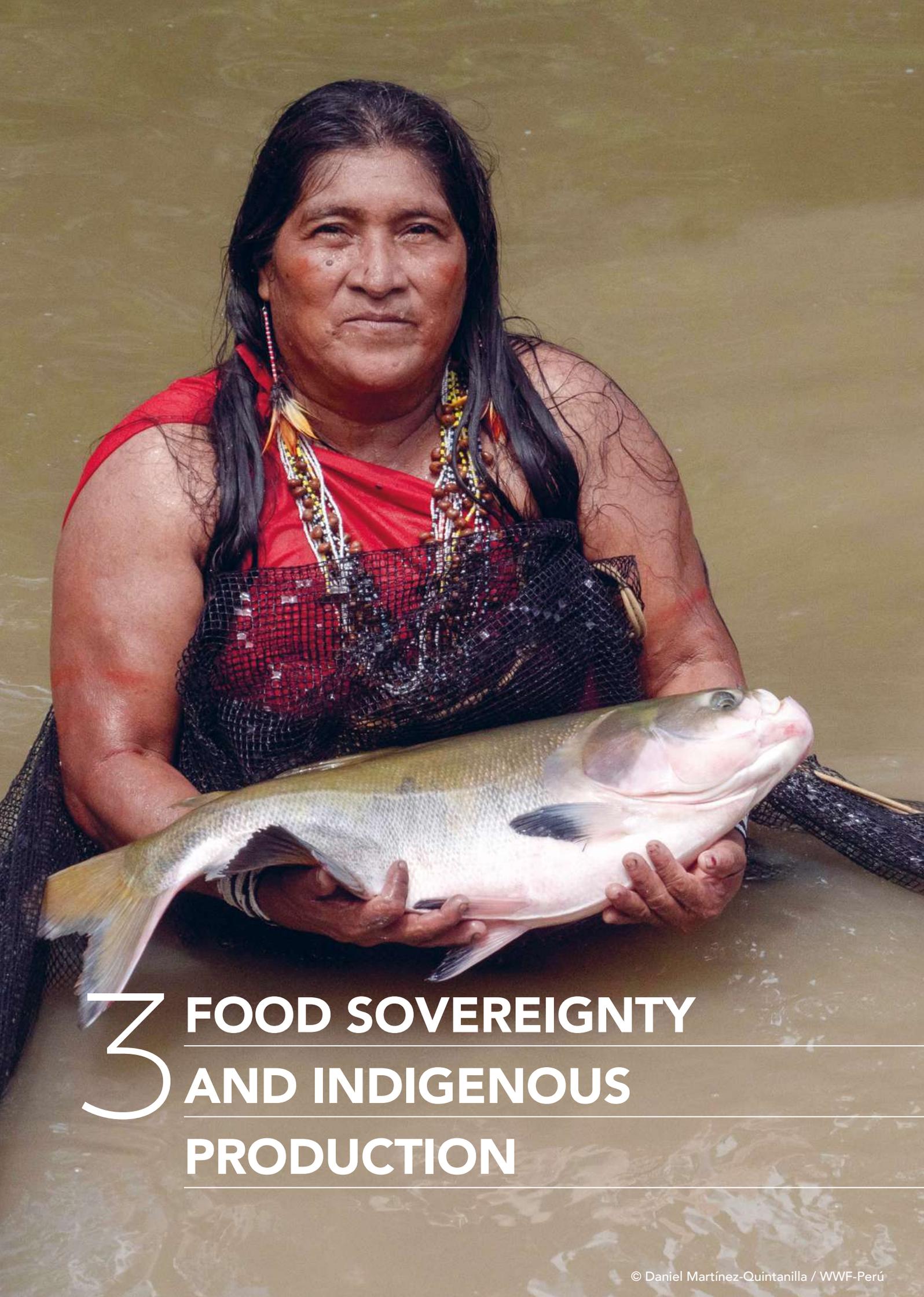
(scheduled activities, set forth in the agreements, safeguards, impacts and continuous monitoring, visit to NC to identify potential risks.)

# Procedure to Title Native Communities: Stages and Terms based on this Experience



Fuente: MDE Saweto: Memoria Viva.





# 3 FOOD SOVEREIGNTY AND INDIGENOUS PRODUCTION

*“We have spoken with the mothers to start aquaculture activities. While we work, we think about how we are going to live, to eat, to educate our children.”*  
*Renee Pujapat Taan, Nazarteth Aquaculture Awajún Women Association*

**W**hen Amazonian indigenous peoples are asked about their relationship to the forest, they have difficulty explaining themselves, because the forest is part of their lives. They do not regard the forest as a third person, but as an intrinsic part of what they are. The forest feeds them, heals them, it is their home, and their connection to the spiritual world. In return, indigenous peoples protect and preserve it. This is why maintaining their homes and livelihoods does not only entail legal security over their lands, but also food sovereignty and indigenous productivity, that is, the exercise of their economic rights.

We all try to come up with ways to improve our quality of life, and build a better future for our children. The indigenous organizations AIDSEP and CONAP are aware of this and, accordingly, they decided that DGM Saweto Peru’s agenda should address the need to strengthen and promote Amazonian indigenous entrepreneurship through sustainable productive activities under the principle of self-determination of indigenous peoples.

*“One lesson learned is the astonishing interest and vocation toward entrepreneurship in the indigenous world. They are full of spirit! And they are aware of how to achieve their goals! I believe the organization has discovered that there is a huge number of entrepreneurships out there; way more than what we expected to find. And they have been battling the odds for a long time, in order to keep going. This is one of the characteristics that any investor or investor fund seeks in an entrepreneur: resilience, not giving up, pushing forward. At times, you might say ‘oh well, whatever may come’, but the next thing you know, is that you are still there, keeping afloat.”* **Kurt Holle, WWF Peru**

Unlike other entrepreneurship promotion initiatives, the proposal of the indigenous organizations for DGM Saweto Peru was to recover

the ancestral practices and knowledge; and to implement productive activities on the basis of the interests and needs of the indigenous communities themselves. Each implemented proposal came directly from the indigenous communities, and addressed their different situations, their view of the world, the existing natural resources, environment sustainability and preservation, and indigenous self-determination.

## **VISION OF INDIGENOUS ENTREPRENEURSHIP: BEYOND COLOR ECONOMY**

The vision of the Amazonian indigenous entrepreneurship is based on community forest stewardship and it is connected to their land's community management, their resources, knowledge and ancestral practices. Indigenous peoples promote a sustainable, collective, reciprocal, and solidary economy that aims at income generation and it is carried out within the framework of indigenous governance, seeking the collective good. It involves the exchange of knowledge and it is based on respect toward themselves and everything around them.





© Daniel Martínez-Quintanilla / WWF-Perú

With these precepts of indigenous entrepreneurship in mind, the AIDSEP and CONAP indigenous organizations suggested to include food safety and indigenous productivity to DGM Saweto Peru's framework as a second component of indigenous forest management, promoting initiatives that contribute to the sustainable management of natural resources and improve food security and income generation by the communities, contributing to a better quality of life.

When work was done with indigenous entrepreneurships, priority was given to technical capacities, placing special focus on increasing added value, and environmental and social monitoring. Efforts were also made to support the women-led indigenous entrepreneurships. The entire process, including the selection of productive activities to be prioritized, the scope, and the relationship dynamics, was carried out within the framework of indigenous governance.

*"We have learned to produce added value. We participated in the ExpoAmazónica fair held in Pucallpa, and it was a huge success. For the first time, [the clients] were able to try paiche cecina and hamburgers. In my community we already have a room for product transformation, including cold chain resources. We also have a 60 hp motorized chalupa to transport our products to Pucallpa."* **Alfredo Rojas ASPASH**

## **A CALL FOR AMAZONIAN INDIGENOUS ENTREPRENEURSHIPS**

Three calls for entrepreneurships were made during the development of DGM Saweto Peru, aiming at strengthening productivity. Each one of them had documents defining the selection process, evaluation criteria, schedule and requirements to be met by each proposal. Regional and local indigenous organizations in charge of implementation developed proposals together with their indigenous communities, which revolved around achieving progress in the productive activities to be strengthened, their contexts, and the interest in their development. On this basis, technical proposals and budgets were prepared for the intervention to be carried out jointly with the indigenous communities benefitting from it.

Once compliance with the requirements of the call for entrepreneurships was verified, the National Steering Committee selected the winning proposals and WWF generated the subgrants with each indigenous regional and local implementing organization, in order to transfer the funds, and thus the support operations for the benefitted productive activity was set into motion. The implementation process encompassed a set of actions to improve technical, productive and operational-financial capacities by WWF towards the regional and local indigenous organizations, and the benefitted indigenous communities.

The selected indigenous entrepreneurships aimed to prioritize food security and sovereignty, the comprehensive use of native polycrops, reaching the largest number of beneficiaries, generating profitable and sustainable income, and increasing the visibility of women during the process.

During the project's five-year implementation period, priority was given to productive activities such as agroforestry, craftsmanship, aquaculture, tourism, and small-scale timber exploitation, providing support to 44 entrepreneurships that benefitted 119 indigenous communities.

*“By implementing the DGM Saweto, we have set an example for the State, proving that titling is a vehicle that follows through to the food security process. We will keep strengthening the approach to food security and economic security through entrepreneurship that have already started with DGM Saweto Peru.” **Waldir Azaña (AIDSESP)***

This kind of support has allowed indigenous communities to strengthen their associativity, productive and commercial capacities, but, above all, they were able to have hope again, because now they have the tools to build a better future for the next generations.

*“Thanks to this project, a new path opens before us. We started implementing aquaculture activities in two communities. The Aquaculture Awajún Women Association of Nazareth was formed and now they are already registered with the Public Registries. They are about to submit projects to PROCOMPITE and other funds, because they have a legal registry. The path is open and now we can move forward on our own.” **Gerson Danducho of the Peruvian Northern Amazonian Indigenous Peoples Organization (ORPIAN-P).***





© Daniel Martínez-Quintanilla / WWF-Perú

## **FACING CLIMATE CHANGE THROUGH COMMUNITY FOREST STEWARDSHIP**

Indigenous communities used to have a nutrient- and mineral-rich diet based on forest resources that changed in recent decades as a consequence of climate change, extractive activities and the alteration of forest ecosystems, which led to diminishing natural resources and affected their way of life.

At the same time, for decades, indigenous peoples have been reaped in the paradox of having incalculable cultural wealth and rich natural resources, while also suffering from monetary poverty, lacking land recognition, and facing limited access to public services<sup>1</sup>.

---

<sup>1</sup> FAO and FILAC. 2021. Forest governance by indigenous and tribal peoples. An opportunity for climate action in Latin America and the Caribbean. Santiago. FAO. <https://doi.org/10.4060/cb2953es>

Peru is one of the most megadiverse countries in the world. However, it is threatened by high deforestation rates, especially in the Amazonian region. Currently, deforestation accounts for almost half of the total greenhouse gas emissions in Peru (d.i.e./ GDI 2014). Peru's FIP (Forest Investment Plan) states that the main causes of deforestation are migration and agricultural expansion, infrastructure, and unregulated timber extraction.

The social indicators for Amazonian indigenous peoples are among the lowest in the country, showing high levels of chronic malnutrition, limited access to education and basic health care, and disproportionate maternal and child mortality rates. Average life expectancy for Amazonian indigenous peoples is lower than the national average by 15 to 20 years.

The change in the forest and foods they have access to has pushed Amazonian indigenous communities to seek alternatives to improve their diet, and also to look for ways to protect the forest, and for income-generating productive options to meet their needs.

For all the abovementioned reasons, and building on the mentality of moving on from protests to proposals, the indigenous organizations tried for community forest stewardship as the most suitable way to strengthen their food security and their indigenous startups.



Indigenous peoples and forests located in ancestral territories play a pivotal role in mitigating climate change, as well as in the fight against poverty and malnutrition. Their territories contain approximately one third of all the carbon stored in the forests of Latin American and the Caribbean. Historically, forests under the indigenous communities' stewardship have suffered much less destruction than other forests in the region. In view of this, supporting sustainable indigenous entrepreneurs is crucial if we want to mitigate climate change, protect the biodiversity, and diminish poverty and malnutrition.

## FROM SUBSISTENCE TO COMPETITIVENESS

Although the processes to improve food security and indigenous entrepreneurship were conceived on the basis of the resources available in each situation, the learning process has proved to be a rich and constant experience that went from a production-oriented approach to also focus on added value, market value and competitiveness.

DGM Saweto Peru entrepreneurs have prioritized a hands-on learning and knowledge exchange mentality. Every time they made progress in their productive activities, or when they obtained recognition by the State or other civil society organizations, they shared the experience and lessons learned, and they even held traineeships with other indigenous communities to exchange knowledge.



*“Our idea is to move forward through entrepreneurs. Now the market is open and we can outline a life plan, which is important for development. It is a document that contains the needs and priorities and defines how we want to develop our economy as indigenous peoples. Through this, competitiveness and development can be attained. We have also added to and corrected the lessons learned during the process. For us, this has been a great opportunity and we have gained experience.”* **Cleofaz Quintori, President of the Regional Union of Amazonian Indigenous Peoples – URPIA.**



© Daniel Martínez-Quintanilla / WWF-Perú

Accordingly, they learned how to outline business plans and detailed investment budgets, they strengthened their internal management, identified potential markets, improved and boosted their associativity, and generated strategic alliances.



*“By looking at the processes included in the technical and financial proposals submitted during the first, second and third call, we can observe a clear and gradual strengthening of the capacities of indigenous entrepreneurships. The design and the quality of the information contained in their proposals has improved, both from a technical and financial point of view. Likewise, the quality of their technical and financial reports also improved.” **Alipse Valera, WWF Peru.***

**FIGURE 4 / DGM SAWETO ENTREPRENEURSHIPS BENEFICIARIES**





© Walter Aguirre / WWF-Perú

## INDIGENOUS INNOVATION

The productive experiences of DGM Saweto Peru were oriented toward innovation, improving processes, sharing and replicating knowledge, and overcoming obstacles. This resulted in productive activities, such as the production of shipiba fashion, paiche cecina and paiche hamburgers, or shica-shica-filled chocolates, which were made possible by adapting the available resources and knowledge to the needs and interests of potential markets, adding value, and creating intercultural products

Similarly, some business practices were not only well-received by indigenous entrepreneurships—they were also incorporated into their own organizational practices. Any time a regional and national fair was held, entrepreneurships offered their products for sale. Fairs have risen as an important tool for promoting and selling products, and for generating strategic alliances.

***“In the case of handicrafts, after the indigenous entrepreneurships’ participation in fairs with the support of their organizations, now it is common practice for them to carry and display their products during meetings with their indigenous organizations, assemblies, or other coordination activities. In other words, they have learned to promote what they produce.” Alipse Valera, WWF Peru.***

Through fair participation, indigenous entrepreneurships were also able to approach other organizations, and even the State and their Regional Governments, and to create alliances. In the case of aquaculture, for example, when the Fisheries CITE became aware that the entrepreneurships would attend ExpoAmazónica 2018, they reached out and offered training to generate added value by making paiche cecina and paiche hamburgers. In addition, they also showed how to improve the products’ presentation by using vacuum packing. The entrepreneurships have also been approached by other organizations, including NGOs, who contributed with technical training.



© Daniel Martínez-Quintanilla / WWF-Perú



© Daniel Martínez-Quintanilla / WWF-Perú

## THE VOICES OF THE ENTREPRENEURS

For over ten years, the Maroti Shobo Women Association has been engaged in textile manufacture using ancestral techniques. With the support of DGM Saweto Peru, they have attended dressmaking courses that combine indigenous textiles with modern designs.

*We are making dresses, T-shirts, skirts and other products. We also have our own facilities, which are paid by all the mothers who work in Maroti. We are doing great and we are thankful for all the support. We attended training workshops and learned a great deal. I did not know how to use an electric sewing machine before—we were so nervous during the lessons—but now we know how to use the machine and make prints.” Enilda, President of Maroti Shobo Association, Pucallpa (Shipibo peoples).*

DGM Saweto Peru has helped us considerably during the production and the implementation of our cacao processing plant, and business coordination. I am grateful for the support, because we were able to join the markets. We received support to participate in the Salon du Chocolat et du Cacao in France and in national events in Peru. This is extremely valuable to us." **Pedro Antezana, Akemito-ENE.**

Our ancestors bred paiche, because there was plenty of it in the lagoons around here. For us, fishing became difficult because the mestizos destroyed our paiche. The fishermen used poison... Our quality of life plan involves breeding paiche to have an economic source of subsistence. Thanks to the support of DGM Saweto Peru, now we are breeding paiche with added value: we are making paiche cecina and paiche hamburgers." **Alfredo Rojas, ASPASH Callería**

"We extract oil from chestnuts and prepare a sweet called 'chancaca'. It can also be used to make chili. Harvesting chestnut is extremely difficult because the wetlands are vast, and you need to carry 70 or 80 kilos. We bring the chestnut by boat to the port. Then it is weighed, labeled and classified at the processing plant to obtain select chestnuts. We currently supply the national market, but our dream is to export our product." . **Jorge Payaba Racua, Chestnut Committee, Tres Islas Native Community, Shipibo and Ese'Eja Peoples of Puerto Maldonado.**

FIGURE 5 / INDIGENOUS ENTREPRENEURSHIPS WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF DGM SAWETO



## ENTREPRENEURIAL WOMEN AND MOTHERS

DGM Saweto Peru included an investment worth USD500,000 aimed at women-led entrepreneurships that benefitted 24 indigenous communities and a total 16 projects led by women.

Not only was the objective achieved, but Amazonian indigenous women demonstrated their outstanding organizational capacities, their enterprising commitment, and a passion for learning. Although some of them already had entrepreneurships, these drew from the competitive approach toward added value generation, transforming primary products into innovations. Moreover, although most indigenous communities have no Internet access, some women entrepreneurships already have a Facebook page to offer their products. Stores have also been implemented, and different selling modalities used, like fairs, visits, and delivery to nearby cities.

*"Ibanko Tsonkiri means hummingbird nest. My grandparents used to knit saratos, kushmas, and natural weaves. Now, with this project, I am working with my moms and we are moving forward."*

**Merly, President of the Ibanko Tsonkiri Craftsmanship Association.**



## Mothers Courage of the Nazareth Native Community

The subproject sought to improve capacities in the production and breeding of Amazonian fish in the Awajún Nazareth Native Community of the District of Imaza, in Bagua, region of Amazonas. The achievements of the subproject's implementation (2017-2019) included: (i) 118 aquaculture producers have ponds implemented for the production of boquichico species; (ii) 120 aquaculture producers received training (115 women and five men) in managing juvenile fish, water quality management, sanitation, breeding prophylaxis, transportation and harvesting, preparation of balanced foods, and handling of aquaculture species. Sales totaled PEN123,000 (each beneficiary sold approximately 70 kg). Moreover, during the COVID-19 lockdown, fish production not only provided food for their families, but also income from their sale.

In principle, this project was approved to be implemented by the entire community, but, taking into account their capacities, the indigenous women took on a leading role. This caused a direct impact on food security, given the low availability of fish for human consumption caused by river pollution. In 2016, an oil spill occurred in the Chiriaco river, affecting the health of children of the community, who gathered oil in buckets at the request of Petroperú employees. The most recent oil spill occurred in February 2018, affecting the Macusari river and the households.



*"We have spoken with the mothers to start aquaculture activities. While we work, we think about how we are going to live, to eat, to educate our children. We harvest our fish and we sell them. Our river is polluted because of the oil spill. We were told not to eat the river's fish and we don't bathe in the river either. When we do, our whole body itches. This is why we fish at the ponds. COVID arrived when we less expected it and we got very sick, and thanks to the fish we bred, we were able to drink some hot chilcano. And we use the proceeds of our sales to buy our medicines." **Renee Pujupat Taan, Nazareth Aquaculture Awajún Women Association (ASMAAN) which gathers 120 aquaculture mothers of the Awajún indigenous peoples.***



© Daniel Martínez-Quintanilla / WWF-Perú

## Chocowarmi: A story of effort and success

Chocowarmi's proposal suggested strengthening the production and sale of chocolate using cacao grown in agroforestry properties led by indigenous entrepreneur women of the Copal Sacha Native Community of San Martín.

*"Our grandparents and we have always lived here in Copal Sacha. We started making chocolate since 2013, as farmer women. We want to improve our quality of life, with the family at home. We handle the entire process—harvest, post-harvest, drying, fermentation, preparation [of the chocolate]. We do everything ourselves. Our flagship product is chocolate with shica-shica, a palm fruit that we have eaten since ancient times. In the future, we would like to export our products."*

**Lluli Chávez, Chocowarmi Association, Kichwa Peoples.**

The Association had been working since 2014, but faced two challenges that prevented the business from growing: 1) They lacked basic implementation for processing, handling and storing cacao-

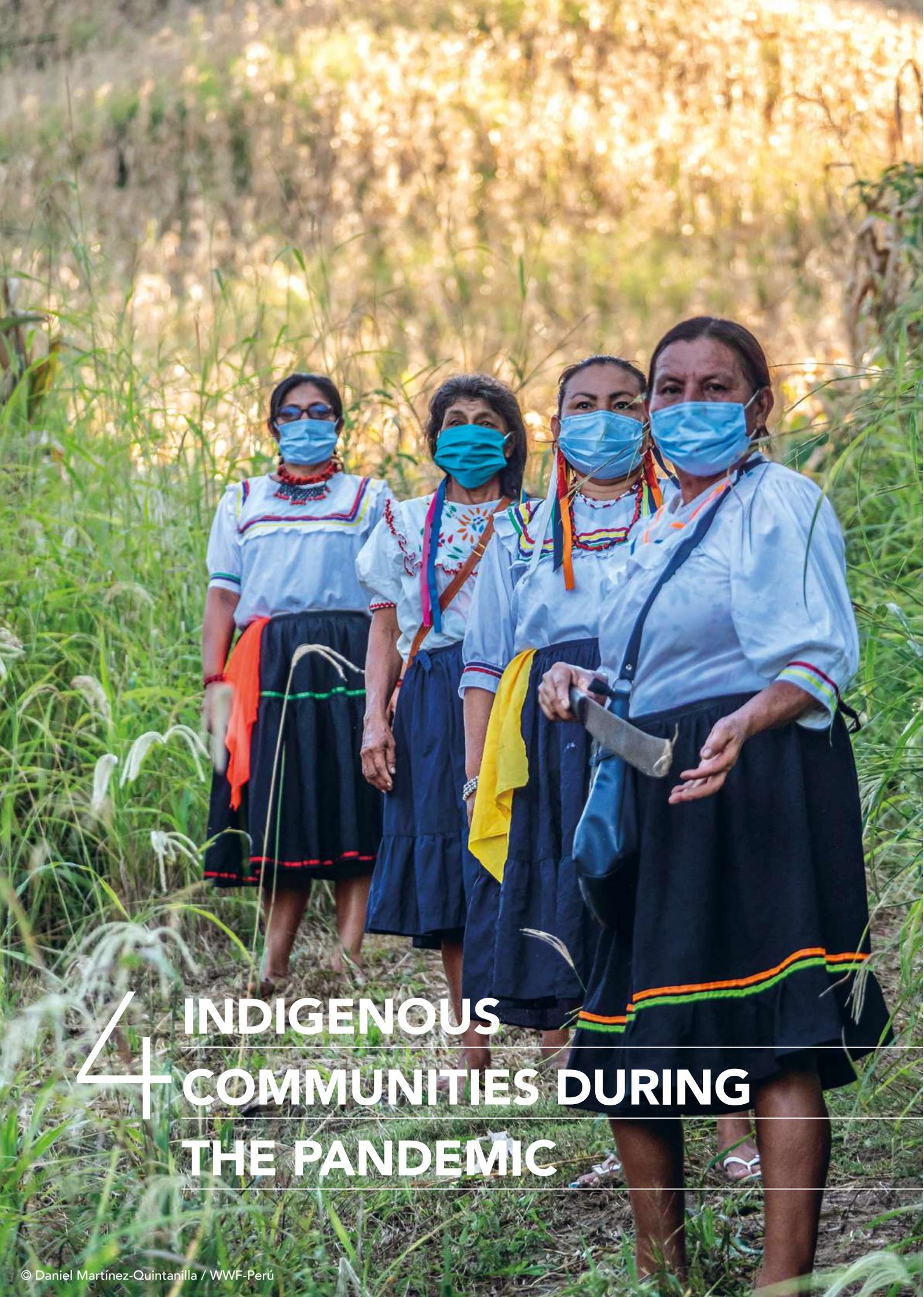
based products, such as paste and byproducts; and, 2) The plant lacked a sewer system to reduce the risk of product contamination.

Chocolate with shica-shica with 45% cacao content received the “Best Innovative Product” award at ExpoAmazónica Ucayali 2018.

With DGM Saweto Peru, Chocowarmi was able to install a new air conditioning unit, a cooler for transporting products, aluminum foil sealing machine, guillotine to cut aluminum foil, infrared laser thermometer to take the chocolate’s temperature, and sewer system through PVC tubes. The subproject’s implementation (January 2018 to June 2019) within the framework of DGM Saweto contributed to income generation for 25 households of the community and empowered adult and young women partners in the productive activities, who obtained better access to resources and acknowledgement of the value of their job.



© Daniel Martínez-Quintanilla / WWF-Perú



# 4 INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES DURING THE PANDEMIC

*"Last year was a bit rough because the pandemic happened and we got the virus. But it did not discouraged us. We keep going." Alfredo Rojas, Shipibo-Konibo Peoples. "*

### **Artisanal Shipibo Fishermen Association (ASPASH)**

**T**he COVID-19 pandemic had a devastating effect for several indigenous and tribal de la peoples<sup>2</sup>, further highlighting the inequality and gaps that exist in the access to public services provided by the State. Several indigenous residents became infected, the indigenous communities lost markets for their products and tourist services while the pressure to exploit forest territories kept increasing.. All of this happened within a context where insufficient access to communications due to lack of electric power or internet, hindered the reports of situation faced indigenous peoples.

*The need to continue the titling processes for indigenous territories and community registration was put in evidence during this situation, as several conflicts arose between indigenous residents and extractive companies. In most countries of the region, mining activities, hydrocarbon exploitation and agribusinesses were deemed essential during the sanitary crisis, and they were exempted from the 61 restrictions imposed by the Governments to prevent contagion."*

This particularly affected DGM Saweto Peru, which was in its last year of implementation. The pandemic caused delays and halted the processes to recognize the indigenous communities and, especially, the land titling activities due to the difficult access to communications, and the mobilization restrictions defined by the Government. In line with this, the project had to restructure the goals that were initially defined, and use a realistic approach based on the new situation.

---

FILAC and FIAY, 2020: [https://indigenascovid19.red/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/2nd-regional-report-covid19-IP-FILAC\\_FIAY.pdf](https://indigenascovid19.red/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/2nd-regional-report-covid19-IP-FILAC_FIAY.pdf)

Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and others, "The impact of COVID-19 on indigenous peoples in Latin America (Abya Yala): Between invisibility and collective resistance", Project Documents (LC/TS.2020/171), Santiago, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), 2020.

Ibid.

Moreover, the pace of productive activities was also affected; training sessions and on-site technical advice were restricted, and indigenous peoples had to isolate themselves. This cut off any possibility to access markets and sell the products, and disrupted the supply of tourist services.

*“The workshop was too short due to the pandemic. Some mothers need brush-up lessons.”* **Merly, President of the Ibanko Tsonkiri Handicrafts Association**

However, Amazonian indigenous peoples have faced the pandemic showing resilience and adaptability. Within the framework of DGM Saweto Peru, the CONAP and AIDSEP indigenous organizations coordinated with the World Bank, as part of the project’s restructuring, the need to redirect funds for the acquisition of biosafety equipment for 440 indigenous communities that are project beneficiaries, and radios for 164 new indigenous communities.



© Daniel Martínez Quintanilla / WWF-Perú



© Daniel Martínez-Quintanilla / WWF-Perú

Having a radio or some sort of communication equipment is vital to ensure the flow of information, and even to contribute to the State's responsibility of serving the indigenous peoples within the context of COVID-19 and other emergencies that take place in the indigenous communities. Moreover, this is the only way to continue exchanging knowledge and information on productive activities, which were not interrupted during the pandemic, and which even redirected resources to meet the food needs of some communities during the sanitary crisis.

*The pandemic posed a challenge to all the World Bank's projects, and DGM did well, in my opinion. The organizations were perfectly aware, even from the start, that they could not wait for the Government. What they did was to discuss their lists of priorities internally, and submit them to the Bank. (...) We could fund a communication infrastructure, because they were going to be isolated and needed a means of communication that would be useful not only for the project's implementation, but also to contact the outside world in matters related to other aspects of the community's life. This is how we approached the situation".* **Ana Luisa Gomes, World Bank**

# 5 GOVERNANCE: INDIGENOUS SELF- DETERMINATION IN ACTION



*"This has been a great and successful experience because the grassroots federations have managed their budgets and scheduled activities in the different projects. This solidified our position and made us known among the national organizations and our native peers located in different regions of the country and the Amazon, and among the nine federations."* **Oseas Barbarán, CONAP**

Indigenous self-determination is the heart of DGM Saweto Peru because it is an initiative that was conceived by the indigenous organizations and was executed by them, including cultural aspects of Amazonian indigenous peoples, such as ancestral practices, cultural values, and the way they organize themselves and make decisions.

For the execution of DGM Saweto Peru, the organizations formed a National Steering Committee with five CONAP representatives and five AIDSESEP representatives, which included at least one women representative per organization. The matter of the project's vast territory was faced through nine regional organizations set up by AIDSESEP, and nine local federations by CONAP.

*"During the meetings we saw how they organized themselves, attending each period's steering council assemblies formed by an equal number of AIDSESEP and CONAP members, sitting at a table, and even reaching agreements within the organizations themselves, in addition to between themselves, and, of course, with the technical secretariat."*

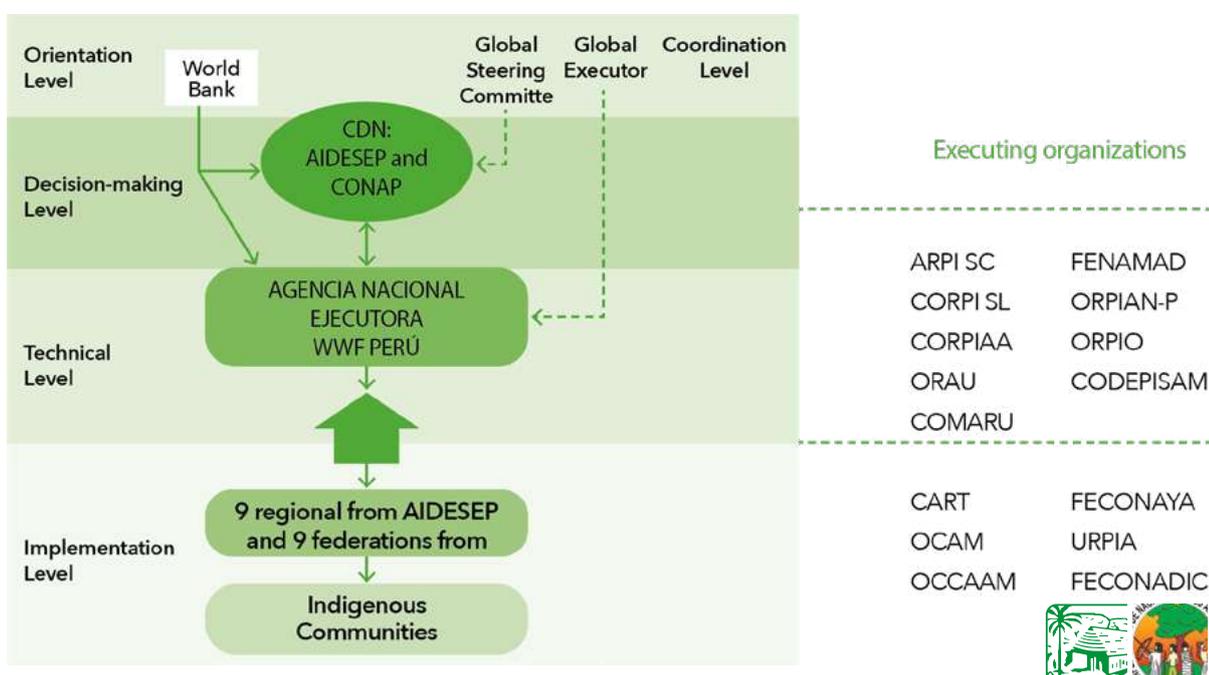
**Lucía Ruiz, former Minister of Environment of Peru**

Coordinating between all these organizations and the indigenous communities was a challenge for CONAP and AIDSESEP. Although they already represented the indigenous communities, they had been unable to visit each community in recent years due to budget constraints. Likewise, the organizations had to strengthen their institutional capacity, adding office management methodologies, and their corresponding personnel and working hours.

The organizational efforts made by the indigenous organizations were the driving force behind the learning process. By working hard and seeking solutions, they achieved a tighter cohesion.

*“El MDE Saweto es un ejemplo concreto de empoderamiento, no solamente de la organización indígena a nivel nacional, sino sobre todo de la organización indígena a nivel sub-nacional. Hacia afuera hay un empoderamiento de las bases”.* **Liliana Lozano,** ex Gerente Senior de Pueblos Indígenas de WWF Perú.

**FIGURE 6 / STAKEHOLDERS AND GOVERNANCE**



In Peru’s case, the organizations’ indigenous management observes their ancestral practices. For DGM Saweto, this meant, for example, a rotational representation with regard to DGM Global. This also posed a challenge to DGM Global, which was not used to handling this type of work methodology.

Also in regard to the experience’s intercultural nature, the World Bank had to make an effort to adapt to indigenous governability. However, by the end of the project, the outcome shows that all parties now have a broader comprehension of the Peruvian indigenous peoples knowledge and work methodology, and of the need to contextualize the regulations and practices together with the indigenous organizations.

As a result, the indigenous organizations, working hand in hand with the World Bank and WWF, generated a series of instruments for project implementation with a strong intercultural component which, in turn, strengthened the trust, transparency and decision-making process on the basis of solid governance.

*The Bank insisted that an impartial and independent grievance mechanism should be in place, and it would make people trust the process. However, the message they wanted to convey was that their organizational structures have their own conflict management system, and they are in charge of solving them.”*

**Johnson Cerda, Technical Director of DGM Global.**

## OPERATIONAL INSTRUMENTS OF DGM SAWETO PERU

- **Operating Manual:** Living document that was modified several times throughout the project to adapt it to the context and operating methodologies of the indigenous organizations
- **Environmental and Social Management Framework (MGAS):** It outlined the potential social and environmental risks of the intervention and had a mitigation plan for such risks. It was updated due to the sanitary crisis.
- **Consultation and Grievance System:** Its mission was to answer questions and doubts concerning the project's intervention, and to address any potential concern or grievance related to the project's activities, places of intervention, or related stakeholders, with the objective of improving and/or adjusting the intervention and processes.
- **Field intervention protocols for indigenous community recognition and land titling processes:** They established the code of conduct and ethics, based on international and national regulations on human and indigenous collective rights, as well as WWF's social policies.



In order to generate and implement these tools, a prior crosscheck and assimilation process was carried out by the implementing indigenous organizations, which was strengthened throughout the entire project implementation period. WWF was the organization in charge of updating the capacities on these instruments and monitor their implementation together with the National Steering Committee.

The lessons learned served to empower Amazonian indigenous peoples, who presented their achievements and experience gained in the DGM Saweto in several occasions, especially during global meetings of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) - COP 22, 23, 24 and 25.

*Normally, we coordinate with national organizations and implementation agencies to prepare an agenda and select the perfect location to visit successful projects. In Peru, there were cacao, tourism and women's initiatives, which other countries were interested in. We then carried out an exchange so [representatives of other global DGMs] could see these activities in Peru. We visited Satipo in June 2018. The delegation included people from Mexico, Brazil, Colombia, Panama, Guatemala, Guyana, Nicaragua, United States and Indonesia."*

**Johnson Cerda, Technical Director of DGM Global**

Similarly, representatives of the CONAP and AIDESEP indigenous organizations visited Indonesia to share the experience in Peru:

*The new DGMs were very interested in the specifics of the Peruvian experience with regard to land titling. We invited two members of DGM Saweto who traveled to Indonesia to speak about their experience, because the topic of titling is also relevant for that country. It was interesting to compare the tasks undertaken in each region. The members of the Global Committee have even asked us to carry out more exchanges—even if they are online—to share the knowledge on land titling.”* **Johnson Cerda, Technical Director of DGM Global**

## AIDSEP AND CONAP REGIONAL AND LOCAL IMPLEMENTING ORGANIZATIONS

- AIDSEP’s implementing regional organizations:
- Asociación Regional de Pueblos Indígenas de la Selva Central - ARPI-SC
- Coordinadora Regional de los Pueblos Indígenas de San Lorenzo - CORPI-SL
- Coordinadora Regional de los Pueblos Indígenas de Aidesep Atalaya - CORPIAA
- Organización Regional Aidesep Ucayali - ORAU
- Consejo Machiguenga del río Urubamba - COMARU
- Federación Nativa del río Madre de Dios y Afluentes - FENAMAD
- Organización Regional de Pueblos Indígenas de la Amazonía Norte - ORPIAN-P
- Organización Regional de los Pueblos Indígenas del Oriente - ORPIO
- Consejo de Desarrollo de los Pueblos Indígenas de la región San Martín – CODEPISAM
- CONAP’s local implementing federations:
- Organización Central de Comunidades aguarunas del alto Marañón - OCCAAM
- Asociación de Comunidades Indígenas Kukamiria del Distrito de Urarinas – ACONAKKU
- Federación de Comunidades Nativas del Distrito de Callería - FECONADIC
- Central Ashánika del Río Tambo - CART
- Federación de Comunidades Nativas Campa Ashaninca - FECONACA

# 6 LESSONS LEARNED FROM DGM SAWETO: A TRAILBLAZING PROJECT



*“The implementation of projects from the perspective of each native community is an urgent necessity. The bottom-to-top approach to sharing knowledge has set an example during this process.”*  
Waldir Azaña (AIDSESP)

**F**or hundreds of years, indigenous peoples have generated, recovered and exchanged knowledge. recuperación e intercambio de saberes. Through DGM Saweto Peru, we all learned and shared the lessons left by this experience. Building on the spirit of the indigenous organizations that made this project a reality by working together with the Peruvian Government, the World Bank, and WWF, below we share a summary of the lessons learned throughout these five years.

## **SOBRE LAS ORGANIZACIONES INDÍGENAS EJECUTORAS**

- With DGM Saweto Peru, indigenous organizations have proved that they can play a role as designers and implementers of projects that meet the expectations of investors, partners, and of the indigenous communities they represent.
- The indigenous organizations of Peru want to lead their own changes, instead of being passive beneficiaries of the projects.
- The indigenous organizations’ institutionality has been strengthened, both inside, and from the inside out. The organizations are the most suitable and have a legitimate right to negotiate with authorities and international cooperation—they observe the forms required by these bodies and generate stable and long-lasting alliances.
- DGM Saweto was made possible thanks to the determination of indigenous organizations, their institutional representativity, and their clear needs, that became a specific agenda that gathered the interests and urgencies of the indigenous peoples. Context also played an important role following the events of Bagua, which made evident that indigenous peoples must join efforts for the sake of the common good, overcoming their differences. These two factors were complemented by the political will of the

Peruvian State, who, through its ministers, provided the crucial support needed to make DGM Saweto a reality.

- In the practice, an intercultural process goes beyond the involved stakeholders. It implies dialogue, understanding the needs, interests and perspectives of each involved party, aiming for adaptive management and the generation of joint strategies. This process translates into enrichment and learning for everyone. DGM Saweto Peru meant that the World Bank and the Peruvian State had to adapt their processes to this challenge, open and improve the channels of communication and exchange of ideas in order to achieve the objectives they agreed upon, and debureaucratize procedures. For indigenous organizations, this entailed becoming familiar with and managing the procedures of the World Bank and WWF as Executing National Agency; and, for WWF, it entailed learning about and strengthening the governance of indigenous organizations to legitimize their decision-making processes with their grassroots, and facilitating dialogue processes between AIDSEP and CONAP.



© Daniel Martínez-Quintanilla / WWF-Perú

- When executors are the principal parties interested in ensuring results for their beneficiaries, the challenges are faced proactively through an objective-oriented approach.
- Indigenous organizations have proven their result-oriented approach by proposing solutions to challenges faced during the process and bringing their proposals forward: changes to legal regulations for recognition and titling processes, hiring consultants for regional governments, indigenous participation in brigades, generation of agreements with regional governments, promotion and update of work plans, among others.
- The indigenous organizations responsibly took on the executing role regarding it as an opportunity. Their activities were aimed at achieving results, but also at obtaining the greatest benefit possible for their indigenous communities, planning on how to improve conditions for their future.
- The DGM Saweto Peru project was part of a commitment of indigenous organizations toward Amazonian indigenous peoples that will remain in place even after the project is concluded, and it will continue acting as a driving force for Amazonian indigenous land titling, the registration of indigenous communities, and indigenous entrepreneurship.

## **TITLING OF INDIGENOUS LANDS**

- The land titling process was crosschecked and simplified. With DGM Saweto Peru, it was possible to analyze the indigenous land titling legal framework and process while putting it into practice. By doing so, the indigenous organizations had the chance to identify the hurdles found in the process and propose improvements. This experience served to audit the indigenous land titling process from their perspective, based on their knowledge of the territory.
- The cost of land titling is not zero. This project has shown how much it costs to recognize an indigenous community and title its territories. Now, future Peruvian governments have this information available to be included in their annual budgets.

- Political will is a crucial aspect of land titling. It influences the achievement of goals and the duration of titling processes. Although strategies for political alliances were generated to bring this project forward, a commitment by local authorities and the State is needed to title all the indigenous community lands that are still pending.
- Land titling continues to be an unresolved matter for the government; it exacerbates inequality and restricts the exercise of rights. Crises, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, and threats have increased and put in evidence the urgency of this while worsening the inequality gap.

## **ECONOMY AND INDIGENOUS ENTREPRENEURSHIPS**

- Given that the concept of economy is holistic, there is a disposition and aptitude by indigenous peoples to incorporate the idea and practices of competitiveness, which are also based on a multidimensional approach. This represents an opportunity, both for indigenous entrepreneurs, and for the Peruvian State.



- Indigenous peoples and their organizations have generated a vision of indigenous economy that aims at income generation but includes their cultural values and their harmonious relationship with the forests.
- Indigenous peoples have an entrepreneurial vocation and they have been working tirelessly on different projects. Learning comes easy to them, and they are oriented toward innovation
- The partnerships between indigenous entrepreneurships and the Centers for Productive Innovation and Technology Transfer (CITES), as well as other State organizations for competitiveness incubation, have led to excellent results. Their promotion is indispensable in order to generate added-value products and services and to open markets
- Indigenous women are interested in and willing to learn production and entrepreneurial activities that are a necessity in their lives. However, it was verified that they need to be visited and trained in the field in order to obtain entrepreneurial projects conceived by them.

## **INDIGENOUS SELF-DETERMINATION**

- Indigenous peoples infuse their ancestral knowledge and practices into all their activities, including governance practices and indigenous autonomy. When working with indigenous peoples, it is paramount that their perspective and self-determination is taken into account in the processes and activities.
- It is relevant to work on an agenda that responds to clear and specific needs, and which is proposed by the indigenous organizations on behalf of their peoples. Similarly, when facing the COVID-19 pandemic, the indigenous organizations have outlined the specific needs of indigenous communities and their grassroots, even outpacing the urgency of meeting the project's deadlines, and reducing the existing communicational gap.



## INDIGENOUS INNOVATION

- Indigenous peoples have demonstrated their great capacity for innovation through an approach focused on learning by making, sharing knowledge and improving processes. This has been reflected in indigenous entrepreneurships and the improvements proposed for simplifying and optimizing titling and community recognition processes. When the local governments changed, the communities proposed agreements; when the regional governments lacked personnel for field visits, they hired consultants; when the regulations were unreasonably complex, they proposed improvements and simplifications; among other initiatives aimed at the achievement of objectives.

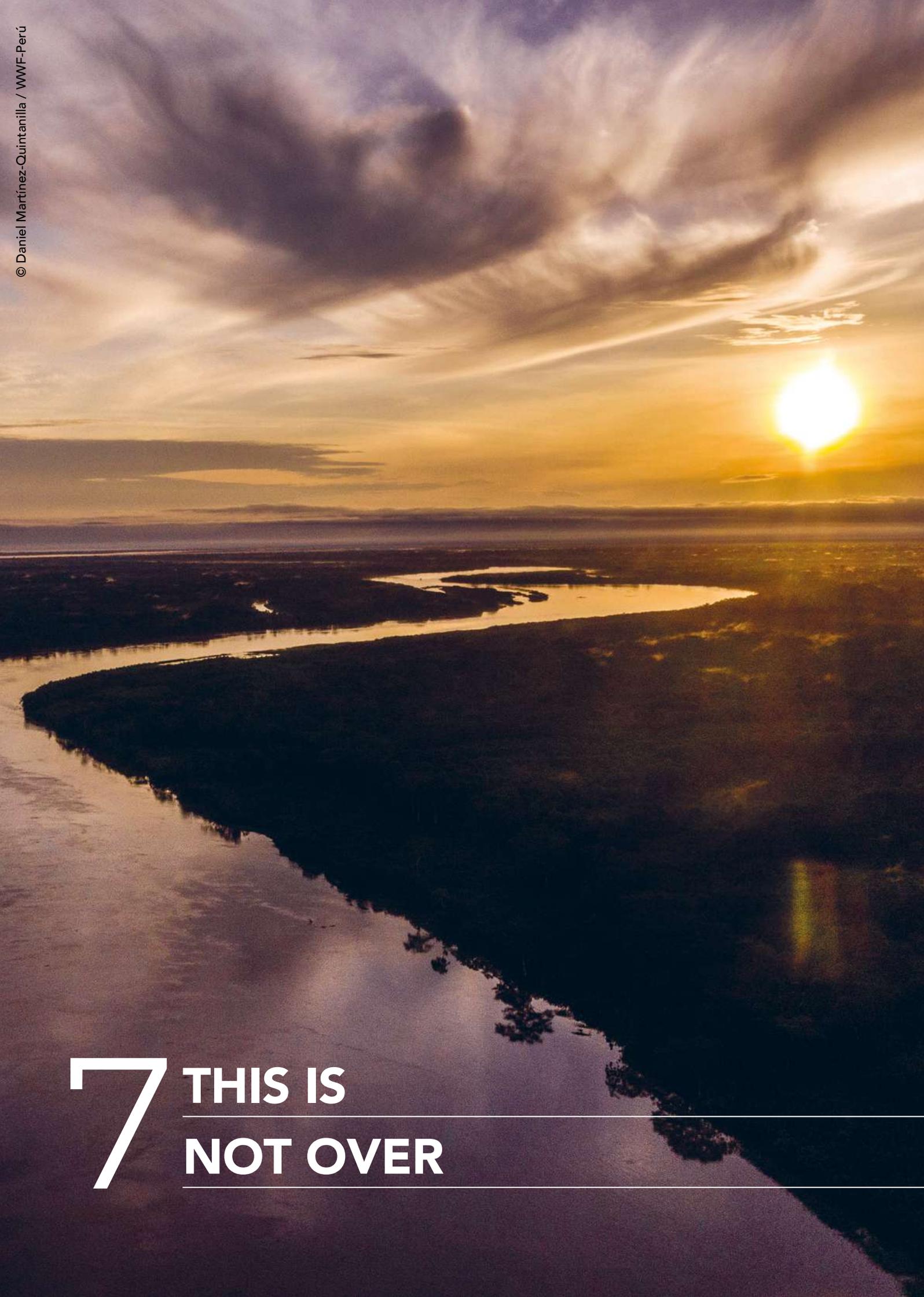
## PANDEMIC

- The pandemic was an external factor that arose while DGM Saweto Peru was under execution and it was out of their control, or the control of any other process taking place around the world. During this event, the communication gap and the isolation of the indigenous communities was put in evidence, and exacerbated their vulnerable situation. However, indigenous organizations and their grassroots reacted with resilience and solidarity, seeking ways to continue the project and adapt to the immediate needs created by the crisis. They organized themselves to distribute foods between communities. Some indigenous entrepreneurships contributed with food and transportation to cover the food needs during the crisis, and the organizations were able to resume

on-site titling actions together with the regional governments, observing biosafety protocols.

- During the implementation of DGM Saweto, it was confirmed that the inequality gap and vulnerability of indigenous peoples worsens during crises, particularly when the support of the State is needed the most, as occurred during the COVID-19 pandemic. Within this context, the government of Peru and others in the region, considered that primary exploitation and extractive activities were the path towards economic reactivation, increasing the extractive pressure on the Amazon by companies engaged in these activities. This, summed up with the indigenous communities' limited communication, led to an increase of socioenvironmental conflicts, which were not covered by the media in most cases and which threatened the indigenous communities individual and collective rights.
- Although the pandemic affected the indigenous entrepreneurs' access to markets they continued producing and planning their commercial strategies.





**7 THIS IS  
NOT OVER**

*"The Project is completed, after years of tireless work. But we will not stop here. We are currently handling resources to provide sustainability to productive projects and economic entrepreneurships."*  
**Oseas Barbarán, CONAP.**

**A**fter five years of achievements, challenges and learning, the indigenous organizations, entrepreneurship and communities will continue to promote the secure tenure of indigenous land and indigenous productive development, because they do not regard this project as a one-time intervention, but a commitment to their peoples and the future of their peoples and the future of their families.

*"The matter of legal recognition of their lands is not yet closed for indigenous peoples. It is but the first step. When this experience makes some inroads, we will also seek sustainability to ensure that this administrative and technical strengthening is not lost. (...) Indigenous organizations taking on larger responsibilities is still a milestone to be achieved. When there is a common good, united we stand."* **Marylen Puquio, CONAP.**

*"The recognition and titling of native communities must continue. In the Amazon, 30 communities that have lived there forever have been made visible. The issue is that the Government or the General Agriculture Bureau do not reach these areas. The challenge continues."* **Waldir Azaña, AIDSESP.**

*Thanks to the project, we acquired an office in Pucallpa, and it is still in operation. The Federation gained trust and now we won another reforestation project. This strengthens the three communities and we are happy to continue working."* **Alfredo Rojas, ASPASH Callería.**

*"We have learned greatly and we want to export. We, the mothers of Maroti Shobo, plan to seek buyers. We keep working and we want to hold workshops ourselves, to look for different models and teach our daughters. This is important for our future."* **Enilda, Maroti Shobo.**

CONAP will continue with the daily activities and also the cacao production. In the central forest, the women artisans participate in fairs. In the last stages of the project, they did not benefit economically, but they continue to promote their products at fairs. The activities that allow them to generate their own profit will continue to be valid." **Marylen Puquio, CONAP.**

GRÁFICO 7 / MDE SAWETO PERU 2016-2021





R

## MEMORIA DE GESTIÓN MDE SAWETO: Memoria Viva

**Prepared by:**  
Kyra Hamann  
Insight Lab

**Coordination:**  
Cynthia Mongylardi  
Directora del Programa Bosques  
y Asuntos Indígenas y  
Coordinadora del Proyecto MDE Saweto Perú

**Review:**  
Cynthia Mongylardi  
Claudia Coronado  
Gerente de Comunicaciones y Marketing  
Samanta Jimenez  
Asistente de Comunicaciones y Marketing

**Photography:**  
Daniel Martínez-Quintanilla  
Walter Aguirre

**Design and Layout**  
Martín Sánchez  
Kyra Hamann  
Insight Lab

**Cover photograph:**  
© Daniel Martínez-Quintanilla  
WWF Perú

**Published by:**  
© WWF Perú. Trinidad Morán 853,  
Lince 15073, Lima – Perú.

<https://www.wwf.org.pe/>

Suggested quote :EWF Perú (2021). MDE  
Saweto: Al Living Memory Memoria.  
Management



**MANAGEMENT REPORT**  
**DGM SAWETO: A Living Memory**

**Prepared by:**

Kyra Hamann  
1nsight Lab

**Coordination:**

Cinthia Mongylardi  
Directora del Programa Bosques  
y Asuntos Indígenas y  
Coordinadora del Proyecto MDE Saweto Perú

**Review:**

Cinthia Mongylardi  
Claudia Coronado  
Gerente de Comunicaciones y Marketing  
Samanta Jimenez  
Asistente de Comunicaciones y Marketing

**Photographs:**

Daniel Martínez-Quintanilla

Walter Aguirre

**Design and Layout:**

Martín Sánchez y Kyra Hamann  
1nsight Lab

**Cover photograph:**

© Daniel Martínez-Quintanilla  
WWF Perú

**Published by:**

© WWF Perú. Trinidad Morán 853,  
Lince 15073, Lima – Perú.

<https://www.wwf.org.pe/>





AIDSEP



CONAP



WORLD BANK GROUP



WWF