

Introduction

Our project information newsletters (PINs) are published with the purpose of strengthening the communication with our partners and other agencies and individuals who have a fundamental contribution to make to the implementation and impact of our projects. This is the first informative bulletin of the project titled: *'Practical actions to cope with the crisis of the livelihoods of indigenous and migrant communities in Moyobamba, Peru'*.

The project is implemented with the financial support of the Big Lottery Fund. The total budget amounts to approximately £ 500,000. The project will be implemented during a period of four years.

The goals that the project aims to achieve are the result of a long learning process developed through a series of interventions implemented by Practical Action in this region, including various projects directly related to the problems of Awajun communities.

The project will address four fundamental issues: i) the inequitable and unsustainable use of the land; ii) the use of inappropriate technologies that cause the degradation of the land, with an increasing number of hectares of forest land turned into agricultural land within Awajun and settler communities; iii) the food and health crisis that affects Awajun women and children; and iv) the weakness of Awajun organizations, which are isolated and disconnected from the national indigenous movement and its agenda.

In this bulletin we provide an overview of the problems facing these populations, the expected results and the sustainability that the project expects to achieve.

Best regards,

Alfonso Carrasco
Director of Practical Action's Regional Office for Latin America

Crisis and conflicts in Awajun communities

The region known as Alto Mayo comprises the provinces of Rioja and Moyobamba in the San Martin region. Alto Mayo has a total surface area of 770,000 Ha. 75% is land with forest aptitude and protected forests. 140,000 Ha of this land are occupied by Awajun communities.

The San Martin region has the highest rates of population growth and deforestation in Peru as a result of the migration process generated by the construction of the jungle-bound access road in 1973 and the promotion by the government of migratory agriculture, which usually results in the destruction and abandonment of about 80% of the forests used for farming activities.

The degradation of the natural resources threatens the food security of Awajun communities, which depend on the forests for their survival, and reduces the opportunities for the settler communities to have access to productive land, exposing them to a higher occurrence of disasters due to natural threats and the pollution of water sources.

On the other hand, the occupation of the land by the settler communities -either through direct invasion or by renting the land- has generated conflicts between the indigenous communities and the migrant population over the use of natural resources, increasing the vulnerability of the livelihoods of the local populations.

To cope with this situation, Practical Action is implementing the project titled: *'Practical actions to cope with the crisis of the livelihoods of indigenous and migrant communities in Moyobamba, Peru'*, with the financial support of the Big Lottery Fund.



A project funded by:



Good Living Project

Objective

Develop the capacities of the populations in the Alto Mayo region to cope with and reduce the degradation of their livelihoods.

Direct beneficiaries

14 Awajun communities in the Alto Mayo region with a total population of 4,559 inhabitants and 2,600 settlers who are under conflict.

Our proposal

- Design and implementation of an equitable and sustainable system for the access to and use of the land with the effective participation of Awajun and settler communities.
- Implementation of technologies for the utilization and recovery of forests increasing the productivity of the settler communities.
- Installation of water and sanitation systems, orchards and farms with participation of Awajun communities to reduce the levels of malnutrition, mortality and morbidity.
- Develop the capacities to influence policies through organizational strengthening, renewing legitimate leadership, and articulation with the actions of the indigenous movement in the country

Expected results

1. **A reduction in the number of conflicts over the use of the land within the territory of the 14 Awajun communities.** The settler population establishes at least 500 lease agreements that are safer than the previous ones and include conditions for environmental protection. The Awajun population increases the income that comes from the use of their land.



2. **A reduction in the number of hectares of land abandoned due to deforestation or degradation of the soil.** Implementation of at least 300 plots of land using agroforestry technologies that contribute to the protection of the forests. The settler farmers adopt these technologies, as well as other sustainable agricultural techniques.
3. **A reduction in the levels of anemia among Awajun women.** At least 600 Awajun women managing family-owned orchards and farms using techniques that enable them to use food products that have a traditional value for their communities. 400 Awajun families have access to drinking water and basic sanitation systems as part of a health education strategy
4. **The Awajun population has a better knowledge of the political institutions and the regulatory framework, and increases their participation in the public debate in the San Martin region.** 50 new leaders, young people and women, leading Awajun organizations. At least 10 project proposals and initiatives are sent by the Awajun communities to their municipalities and are approved for funding

How sustainability will be ensured

As regards to local institutions, the leaders and members of FERIAAM (Regional Indigenous Awajun Federation of Alto Mayo) will have

new capacities that will enable them to provide ongoing support to the development of the Awajun communities. As regards to policies, the project proposes the incorporation of the issues related to access to the land and conflicts over the ownership of the land in the public agenda of the local and regional governments.

As regards to the communities, local agricultural promoters will be trained to provide technical assistance services, dynamizing the learning process, and responding to the needs of the settler farmers. Additionally, the Awajun population will take part in the design, implementation and operation of the drinking water systems proposed by the project, thereby ensuring the continuity of these systems.



Practical Action

Practical Action is an international technical cooperation organization that contributes to the sustainable development of the poorest populations through research, application and dissemination of appropriate technologies.

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