

Improving health care provision for indigenous people in the Amazon region of Peru

SFF Indígena

Context

Of the entire Peruvian population, the indigenous peoples of the Amazon have been hit hardest by the COVID-19 pandemic. Reasons include the limited response from basic medical services, difficulties in accessing indigenous communities, misleading information about vaccines, and a lack of knowledge on the part of medical staff regarding SARS-CoV-2. This is hampering efforts to contain the coronavirus and increase vaccination rates. It is against this backdrop that the Peruvian Ministry of Health implemented its plan for the Amazon region, which was designed to reduce the negative impact of the spread of the coronavirus in the region and encourage vaccine take-up among its indigenous communities and in its rural centres.

Title	Improving health facilities for indigenous peoples in the Peruvian Amazon
Commissioned by	Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung (BMZ)
Financier	Study and Expert Funds in Peru
Country	Peru
Lead executing agency:	Ministry of Health (Minsa)
Overall term	2020 to 2022

Objective

The Ministry of Health successfully implements the Amazon plan and in so doing better equips health facilities in the border regions. Medical staff, community health workers (CHWs) and indigenous leaders promote vaccination in indigenous peoples' own languages.



Health workers on their way to indigenous communities in the San Martín region



Photo left: Vaccination brigades in the Loreto region.

Photo right: Start of vaccination campaign of the indigenous community of the Matsés in the Loreto region.

Approach

The project is helping to provide health facilities in the Amazon, Loreto, San Martín und Ucayali regions with better equipment. Indigenous border communities are being supplied with basic medical kit, oxygen concentrators, renewable energy installations and communication systems.

Additionally, the project is developing workshops for medical professionals and community representatives to assist with culturally contextualised training and communication strategies concerning COVID-19. It is also creating audio and graphic products in local languages to help reduce the spread of infection.

Moreover, the project is promoting the sharing of information and knowledge with a view to expanding expertise and experience in the areas of prevention and vaccination in the countries bordering Peru. To this end, it has established an overarching platform with the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), the Peruvian Ministry of Health's directorate for indigenous peoples, and the Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization (ACTO).

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