



# Global Programme Responsible Land Policy Good Practice

PERU: SIC COMUNIDADES – A RURAL CADASTRE SYSTEM

# Programme

THE GLOBAL PROGRAMME RESPONSIBLE LAND POLICY (GPRLP) IS PART OF THE SPECIAL INITIATIVE 'ONE WORLD, NO HUNGER' OF THE GERMAN FEDERAL MINISTRY FOR ECONOMIC COOPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT (BMZ), WHICH AIMS TO REDUCE EXTREME POVERTY AND HUNGER.



The programme is implemented by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH in countries across Africa, Asia and South America. Its main objective is to secure access to land as a major prerequisite for poverty and hunger reduction in rural areas, especially for women, marginalized groups and indigenous peoples.

## THE GLOBAL PROGRAMME IS IMPLEMENTED ALONG THREE FIELDS OF ACTION:

- Improving procedures to secure land ownership and user rights for the rural population
- Strengthening civil society
- Improving the framework conditions for responsible agricultural investments

The last aim does not apply to GPRLP implementation in Peru.

In Peru, ProTierras Comunales (PTC), as part of the Global Programme, aims to improve the access to land and natural resources for native communities in the Peruvian Amazon, in the regions Ucayali and San Martín. A functional and regularly updated digital cadastre system was created to improve the land titling system.

# Starting point

WHEN PTC STARTED AT THE END OF 2015, there was neither consolidated official information on the number of native communities (*comunidades nativas*) and their legal status in the project regions, nor at national level. The governing body (the *Dirección de Saneamiento de la Propiedad Agraria y Catastro Rural*) in the Ministry of Agriculture operated a cadastre system based on outdated technology and data only for individual rural landholdings. The information on communities (both Amazonian native and high-land peasant communities in Peru receive collective land titles) was managed in Microsoft Excel tables and updated based on information provided by the 25 regional governments. Due to the precarious conditions of the regional land title archives, this did not function effectively.

The main partners of PTC are the Ministry of Agrarian Development and Irrigation (former Ministry of Agriculture) at the national level and the agricultural offices of the Amazonian regions of San Martín and Ucayali. Since 2016, PTC has supported the regional agricultural offices in its two project regions, focusing on the titling processes of 128 communities (57 in Ucayali and 71 in San Martín) identified during a baseline study. These communities have a total population of approximately 30,000 (6,000 and 24,000, respectively) indigenous people, who benefit directly from the monitoring of land tenure security enabled via the cadastre system.



Land title archive in Ucayali (2017).

# Approach

IN THE ABSENCE OF ADEQUATE OFFICIAL DATA, PTC supported a specialized NGO which had developed an information system on native communities since 2000 to conduct a baseline study. With this study, published in 2016, an updated directory of communities in need of titling was made available for the two project regions. In addition, for monitoring purposes, PTC developed a Microsoft Excel table per region that allowed tracking the sequence of steps in the lengthy community recognition and titling processes. This table is constantly being updated.

In 2017, based on these first experiences and in the context of an ambitious overhaul of the Rural Cadastre System in Peru (supported by the Inter-American Development Bank), the Ministry requested PTC's support to:

1. improve the technological platform used for individual land titles, which for the first time would include the geographic shapes of the indigenous and peasant communities, resulting in the so-called SICAR (*Sistema de Catastro Rural*);

The step-by-step monitoring process of community titling in the SIC Comunidades.

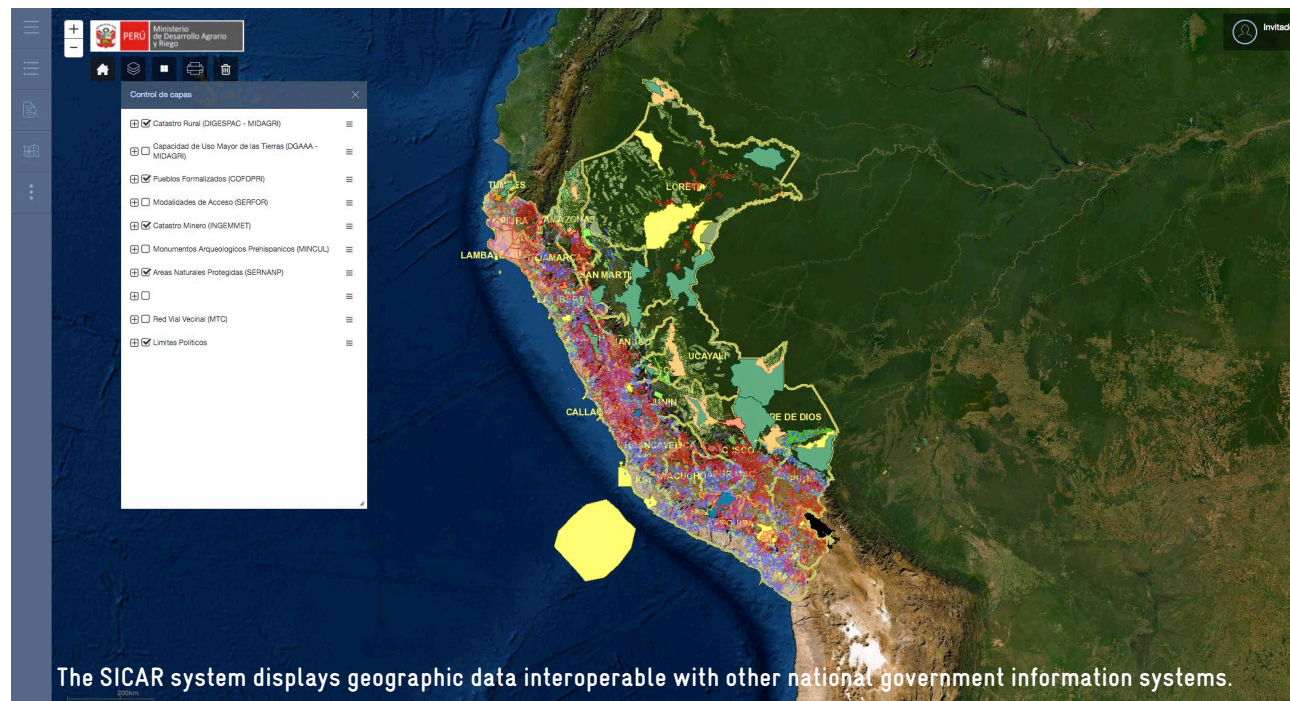
2. create a web-based tool to facilitate monitoring of the community recognition processes, titling and area expansion, with IT consultants converting the PTC monitoring system into an alphanumeric and geographical information system, the so-called SIC Comunidades (*Sistema Catastral de Comunidades Campesinas y Nativas*).

In both systems, PDF files of all land-relevant information are uploaded, creating a digital archive. The time-consuming digitization of community files and data uploading in the two project regions (and subsequent transfer to the Ministry) was mainly done by young indigenous interns (see *'Good Practice: Indigenous Professional Internship Programme'*). The systems

generate cadastral products like official summary sheets of all relevant land information. During 2017 and 2018, both systems, which are mutually compatible as well as with other government information systems, were tested and improved. In September 2018, through a ministerial decree, the use of the Rural Cadastre System (SICAR & SIC Comunidades) was declared obligatory for the 25 regional governments for all current and future titling processes. However, the shortage and frequent rotation of regional government staff is a challenge to uploading of past and current information into the system.

# Positive changes

1. The immediate benefit for indigenous peoples and native communities from the digital Rural Cadastre System lies in the **improved legal security of their communal territories**. An important technical aspect is the fact that both SICAR and SIC Comunidades **interoperate with other national government information systems** (e. g. on protected areas or production forests). This highlights current territorial overlaps and helps prevent future conflicts.
2. The system also **supports native communities in their expansion processes**. In Peru, if communities can prove and document that they do not have enough land, they have the right to request a so-called '*ampliación*' (extension of previously titled area).
3. According to the SIC Comunidades (1/2020), there are 2,268 recognized native communities, of which only **1,588 (70 %) have a title on their territories**. In the case of peasant communities, 6,270 are recognized and 5,151 (82 %) have titles on their lands. The innovative approach of PTC has **contributed to the consolidation of these figures**, which are used by the Ministry of Agriculture to request the necessary budget and



support from other ministries to solve obstacles to the pending community titling processes.

4. The implementation of both cadastral systems **improved dialogue and information exchange between the two administrative levels in charge of titling processes**. This enables **more efficient processes** for both native and peasant communities.

5. The documentation of the shapes of their territories and their legal status in an official cadastre system makes the communities 'visible' and **increases their tenure security**. Titled communities are **eligible for different types of government support**, such as access to the forest protection programme. Communities that are in the process of titling or will be titled in future benefit from an **improved monitoring process**.

# For replication

## THE PUBLICATION OF A MINISTERIAL DECREE

(RM 0362-2018-MINAGRI) and the public launching of the Rural Cadastre System were the starting points for a national-level implementation (vertical scaling up). The launch took place in the presence of representatives of important national indigenous and peasant organizations in September 2018. Subsequently, SICAR has been made available to the wider public on the Ministry's homepage, which increases the overall transparency.

The SIC Comunidades is only available to registered users (mainly regional government staff), since it contains sensitive information on indigenous rights (following the *'do no harm'* principle). Indigenous organisations have access to the information through the interoperability of SICAR with AIDSESEP's (Interethnic Association for the Development of the Peruvian Rainforest) CIPTA (Centre for Territorial Information and Planning). The update of this system was also supported by PTC.

Given that a rural cadastre system is by definition a governmental responsibility, the replication of this approach in dialogue with host government partners recommends the following aspects:

- Be as participatory as possible and include the views of all actors, especially native communities (or whoever is covered by the system), including regional governments and other ministries.
- Start with simple tools, e. g. Microsoft Excel tables, and upgrade them during the process (*'fit for purpose'*).
- Ensure that the rural cadastre system is compatible with the information systems of other sectors.
- Stress the importance of creating conditions (personnel, funds) for maintaining and updating the information regularly.



# Further information

➤ [Public access to SICAR:](#)  
[Ministerio de Desarrollo Agrario y Riego \(2021\)](#)  
(in Spanish)

➤ [Ministerial Decree](#)  
[\(Resolución Ministerial\)](#)  
[0362-2018-MINAGRI,](#)  
Ministerio de Desarrollo Agrario y Riego (2018)  
(in Spanish)

➤ [ICT Solutions in GIZ](#)  
[Land Governance Projects –](#)  
[Survey Results, GIZ \(2019\)](#)  
(accessible for GIZ staff only)

➤ [Digital Innovations –](#)  
[Global Programme](#)  
[Responsible Land Policy,](#)  
GIZ (2019)

➤ [The Global Programme](#)  
[Responsible Land Policy,](#)  
GIZ (2019)

➤ [SICAR tutorial,](#)  
[MIDAGRI TV \(2019\)](#)  
(Video, in Spanish)



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