

Reduction of human insecurity in Alto Wangki Bocay Nicaragua: An integrated, multi-sectoral and intercultural human security intervention



UN Trust Fund for Human Security



Fast Facts

Country: Nicaragua

Duration: August 2012 to July 2015

Implementing UN Agencies: UNDP; FAO; UNFPA; UNICEF; IOM

Other Implementing Partners: National Ministries; Indigenous Territorial Governments; indigenous CBOs; national justice and security sectors; National Maternity Homes Network; JICA

Budget: 3,596,447.61

Key Words: Minority communities; rural communities; women; youth; access to basic social services; capacity-building; agricultural development

BACKGROUND

The ethnically diverse Alto Wangki Bocay region, located along the border with Honduras, is one of the most isolated and inaccessible regions in Nicaragua. It consists of 3 indigenous territories inside the Bosawas Biosphere Reserve, which is the largest tropical rain forest reserve north of the Amazon. The population is confronted by a range of insecurities, with women and children being particularly vulnerable due to unequal gender relations, high levels of illiteracy, unplanned pregnancies, lack of control over economic resources

and domestic violence. Many children lack access to education, basic hygiene and nutrition and are deprived of birth certificates that would guarantee citizenship status and access to services. Moreover, the region is politically disenfranchised and faces inter-cultural problems with deep structural roots. These issues are exacerbated by growing tensions between mestizo migrants and the indigenous populations over land and property, as well as the impact of environmental hazards.

PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The overall goal of the project is to reduce human insecurities in indigenous territories and rural communities of Alto Wangki Bocay. In this regard, the project aims to: (i) improve economic security by means of capacity building for economic development, including, improved productivity and quality for agriculture and alternative production; (ii) reinforce personal security such as access to the justice system, community capacity building and protection against sexual and domestic violence; (iii) strengthen

basic health care services, especially sexual and reproductive health and nutrition; (iv) strengthen intercultural dialogue and reduce environmental problems along the micro river basins; (v) enhance the protection and promotion of human rights through strengthening of local administrative capacity and advocacy, (vi) provide higher quality of formal education; and (vii) promote awareness of the human security concept among institutions and organizations.

BENEFICIARIES

The project directly benefits 10,566 indigenous people and 2,625 mestizos living in conditions of extreme poverty and geographical isolation. Indirect beneficiaries include at least 25,000 people who

receive services through community extension workers, gain access to radio programs, and benefit from greater income by family members.



APPLYING THE HUMAN SECURITY APPROACH

The complex nature of the issues facing the communities in Alto Wangki Bocay calls for an integrated approach that implements people-centred actions in collaboration with community-based organizations. A multitude of insecurities, such as, poverty, violence, inadequate governance, interethnic tensions, environmental disasters and lack of healthcare, affect every part of Alto Wangki Bocay region. In this regard, the project identifies the most urgent insecurities and promotes evidence-based and contextually relevant interventions. For example, to encourage inter-community dialogue and partnership, the project's approach is multi-sectoral and inter-cultural, targeting the entire community and bringing the mestizo community and indigenous people together through its activities.

Moreover, the application of a dual framework of protection and empowerment, combines top-down institutional measures with bottom-up participatory mechanisms that support the crucial role of individual and community input. Reinforcing the capacity of institutions to ensure access to legal protection, formal education, and official documentation reduces violence and enables people to take control over their

own future. These protective institutional measures are combined with improving health services, in particular sexual and reproductive health and family planning. Meanwhile, the project promotes diversification of economic opportunities for both men and women and stresses the importance of women's economic empowerment through the indigenous women's organizations.

The human security concept offers a practical and dynamic framework, suitable to address wide-spread and cross-cutting threats in a comprehensive and coherent manner through collaboration and partnerships between UN agencies, national ministries, territorial authorities and local indigenous associations. Ultimately, the indigenous communities are key stakeholders and each component of the strategy must assure community ownership of the implementation process and promote a culture of openness and coexistence. Accordingly, the human security framework serves as a valuable tool for people to collectively act as agents of change in the region and to efficiently mitigate and prevent the myriad of threats that are facing their communities.