



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



## CITIZEN VOICES AND ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITY

Democratic development depends on citizens' ability to effectively advocate for their interests and participate in informed debate to influence receptive policymakers. The Citizen Voices and Engagement activity helps Peruvians raise their public policy concerns and empowers them to hold elected officials accountable.

In Peru, cynicism, mistrust, and dissatisfaction with the government are rife. Many citizens believe that officials govern only for the benefit of their own patronage networks. The 2021 Americas Barometer survey of democratic public opinion found that four out of five Peruvians were dissatisfied with how their democracy functions. Eighty-eight percent—the highest rate in Latin America—believed that most or all politicians are corrupt. Another poll, conducted by this activity in September 2021, more deeply explored citizen views of government in Peru and found that 82 percent of Peruvians felt very poorly represented by their congressperson, and 76 percent felt very poorly represented by their district mayor. Moreover, 77 percent felt very strongly that elected leaders take little or no interest in what people like them think, and 34 percent believed that no political party represented their interests. This activity endeavors to address these challenges.

## HOW DOES THE ACTIVITY WORK?

This activity promotes policy dialogue among citizens, candidates, and elected officials to better match public policy with constituent needs. This activity works with historically marginalized populations to define and articulate their concerns. It encourages media partners, artists, and public figures to raise awareness of key issues. It also establishes demographically representative citizen assemblies to further study and discuss policy choices and then translates policy preferences into concrete legislative proposals ready for debate by congressional committees. The activity trains journalists to inform issue-based debate, supports candidates and political parties to develop issue-based political platforms, and contributes to the development of Peru's democratic political culture through civic education in secondary schools.

Ultimately, this activity aims to reduce Peruvians' sense of alienation from political processes and build faith in Peru's democracy by involving citizens in governmental decision-making.

## WHAT RESULTS ARE EXPECTED?

- Three hundred citizens become more directly involved in public policy through citizen assemblies that discuss and formulate public policy recommendations.
- National media, artists, and opinion leaders raise awareness of contested political issues and citizen-led initiatives.
- Congressional representatives make law and policy based on the views and proposals of constituents on at least ten issues of public concern.
- Historically marginalized groups including women, youth, indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, Afro-Peruvians, and members of the LGBTQI+ community effectively engage in policy debates and influence governmental reforms.
- Political parties consider citizen concerns to shape their party platforms. At least 50% of parties adopt measures to increase the participation of marginalized groups in their parties.
- Candidates for election in subnational election campaigns debate substantive citizen policy initiatives.
- A new civic education curriculum builds democratic citizens for the future and teaches school children about democratic institutions, values, and processes.

## PROJECT INFORMATION

**IMPLEMENTER:** International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA)

**COMPONENT DURATION:** 6/07/2021 to 12/6/2023

**USAID FUNDING:** \$2,346,445

**LEVERAGE:** \$2,350,506

**LOCATION:** Arequipa, Cusco, La Libertad, Lima, and Loreto

**COORDINATOR'S NAME:** Martin Castro

**TELEPHONE:** (51-1) 618-1486

**EMAIL:** mcastro@usaid.gov