



Review of Cash Giving in Peru: 2008-present

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Summary

This historical analysis of committee giving in Peru seeks to demonstrate how the model came about, how it has evolved as a result of learnings over the years and how its management and delivery has often been determined by elements outside Cool Earth control. This project which has often been referred to as the Cool Earth model is grounded in the payment for ecosystem services (PES) logic and has followed it up until now, despite efforts to steer it towards unconditional forms of payment. Although its foundations and the learnings associated will greatly help the design of Cool Earth's future cash giving strategy, we conclude that the project as it stands is prone to elite capture, should have followed more rigorous and consistent FPIC protocols as well as a better understanding of local contexts, and is actually heavily conditional, and as such contradicts Cool Earth beliefs and values.

In the future, we propose that we co-develop the design of unconditional cash giving projects with partners on the ground by working on coherent and contextual methodologies to establish payment amounts, schedule disbursement cycles and create fit-for-purpose, bottom-up M&E systems.

1. The model

Cool Earth's partnerships with six Asháninka and Awajún communities were made possible by Welsh anthropologist Dilwyn Jenkins. His thirty-year friendship working with Asháninka villagers from the indigenous community of Cutivireni, located in the province of Junín, meant that when they were approached by loggers, they contacted Dilwyn for advice instead of accepting the offer forthwith. Dilwyn, in turn, contacted Cool Earth to explore alternative financial solutions which would give the community funds they needed for essentials such as emergency access to healthcare, strengthened livelihoods and education, without stripping them of their most valuable asset, their forest.

Initially the partnership between Cool Earth and Cutivireni was managed by the Peruvian office of Ecotribal, a company founded by Dilwyn Jenkins in January 2005 and already working in Cutivireni. In the first year of the partnership, in 2008, just under US \$15,000 were transferred directly to the community in return for keeping the forest standing.

Two years later, in 2010, new partnerships were established with neighbouring communities of Camantavishi and Parijaro. That year also saw the signature of the first partnership agreements between the communities and Cool Earth which formally described the conditionality of the funding and set out the commitments of both parties.

A community association, Tsimi, was established in Cutivireni in 2010 to manage the fund on the community's behalf. Management of the fund in Camantavishi and Parijaro remains with the existing community governance structure, the community board, or nominated individuals within the community. Disbursements of a community fund ('bridge funding' until 2020, committee giving since 2020) are made twice a year and decision making on how the funds were spent was driven by the community. In this way the Cool Earth model was born.

2013 saw the launch of the Awajún partnership, also through Ecotribal, with two further communities of Urakuza and Huaracayo, situated in the province of Amazonas. Finally, in 2014 a fourth Asháninka community, Oviri, came on board taking the total number of communities to six. In the same way that Tsimi was created to manage Cutivireni's funding, the community associations of Umukai, Jempe and Iyare were set up to manage funds for Urakuza, Huaracayo and Oviri respectively.

Committee giving in Peru is Cool Earth's longest running project.

2. The design

a. From no strings attached to replicating a payment for ecosystem (PES) scheme

For the first two years of the bridge funding project in Cutivireni funds were given to the community without any formal partnership agreement. In 2011, a one year rolling forest agreement, which we discuss later in this document, was introduced to formalise the funding relationship and spell out the parties' roles and responsibilities: funding from Cool Earth, via Ecotribal until 2015, would be donated in return for their commitment not to cut their forest. At the time, this approach echoed that of government, non-governmental and academic institutions, which were beginning to experiment with payments for ecosystem services. The Programa Nacional de Conservación de Bosques¹ (PNCB), introduced by the Peruvian government in 2010, is a good example of this. In fact, Camantavishi joined the programme in 2014, Oviri and Parijaro in 2017 and Cutivireni in 2018.

Records of how Ecotribal managed and administered committee funding between 2011 and 2015 are sparse. An important Cool Earth/Ecotribal intervention during that time was the creation of community associations² (Tsimi in Cutivireni, Umukai in Urakuza, Jempe in Huaracayo and Iyare in Oviri) for the sole purpose of managing the funding from Cool Earth and Ecotribal. Although structured to mirror traditional governing bodies of both Asháninka and Awajún communities, these associations were registered separately and operate under different statutes.

b. Cool Earth in Peru: why bridge funding?

In 2015, Cool Earth took over all operations from Ecotribal in Peru. Steps to register as an International Non-Profit Entity and/or Institution for Technical Cooperation, incorporated abroad (ENIEX) began and legal status was granted in January 2016. On top of regulations, protocols and strict financial reporting imposed on INGOs implanted in Peru which had consequences on the design of this project, a change in terminology and thinking also occurred. Cool Earth would no longer frame their funding as PES but instead as a 'bridge fund'. There are no written records explaining the reasons for this move but we can attempt a guess based on conversations with long-standing Cool Earth employee:

¹ The National Programme for the Conservation of Forests is an agency of the Peruvian Ministry of Environment (<http://www.bosques.gob.pe/>). The programme compensates individuals or communities S/.10.00 per hectare of forest conserved.

² The reasons why Camantavishi and Parijaro have managed to retain their traditional governance structures to manage funding are unknown to the author of this document.

- i. A real push to promote and portray indigenous peoples and local communities (IPLCs) as being the best custodians of the forest.
- ii. A strong belief that tackling poverty and strengthening livelihoods would help curb deforestation in the tropics.

As a result, until the livelihoods of IPLCs are enhanced through a series of other interventions ('parallel activities' as they are often referred to), a temporary bridge fund would serve as an income/development boost for these communities.

c. Channeling funds to indigenous communities in Peru

Over the years, efforts to fight widespread corruption in Peru has meant that new policies and regulations are regularly put in place at every level. As anticipated, International non-governmental organisations (INGO) also have to comply with strict and bureaucratic audit cycles and financial reporting. As a consequence, the community associations receiving Cool Earth funds are also accountable to governmental authorities.

In Peru, every penny spent needs to be accounted for and reported to the Superintendencia Nacional de Aduanas y de Administración Tributaria³ (SUNAT). All of Cool Earth's donations to the partnerships are therefore reported and all receipts duly presented, even when the receipts don't exist. These financial reports may also be requested by the Agencia Peruana de Cooperación Internacional⁴ (APCI) or the Superintendencia de Banca, Seguros y AFP⁵ (SBS). Needless to say that this reporting system does not take into account IPLC specificities and systems.

As such, a supporting project, currently called organisational support, was created by Cool Earth to help both community associations as well as pre-existing community management structures navigate Peruvian legal and financial structures. Activities include support to establish community bank accounts, support the registration of new committee members to the board, assist the presentation of tax declarations to the tax office and help with planning, accounting and reporting of funds during general assemblies. For this a Field Officer position was created in each of Cool Earth's offices in Satipo and Bagua.

The financial regulations set by the Peruvian state had implications for the forest agreement. On top of the communities' commitment to actively protect the forest, disbursements of funding by Cool Earth to the communities' bank accounts is conditional to the presentation of accounts to avoid fines and penalties. This is still explicitly stated in the most recent forest agreements.

3. Financials

a. How much has Cool Earth donated to its partners in Peru since 2008?

Between 2008 and 2020, Cool Earth has donated approximately US \$1,268,700⁶ to partnerships in Peru, as shown in **Figure 1** below. The distribution of funding according to partnerships is shown in **Figure 2**.

³ The National Superintendency of Customs and Tax Administration.

⁴ The Peruvian Agency for International Cooperation.

⁵ The Superintendency of Banking, Insurance and Pensions.

⁶ Data and graphs below can be accessed [here](#).

Amounts shown in the graphs are not exact for a couple of reasons:

1. We have no records of forest agreements prior to 2014. The amounts registered are based on conversations with long-standing staff members.
2. Up until 2016, forest agreements were signed with funding amounts in US dollars. Amounts were then changed to Peruvian Soles meaning that conversions are based on average exchange rates.

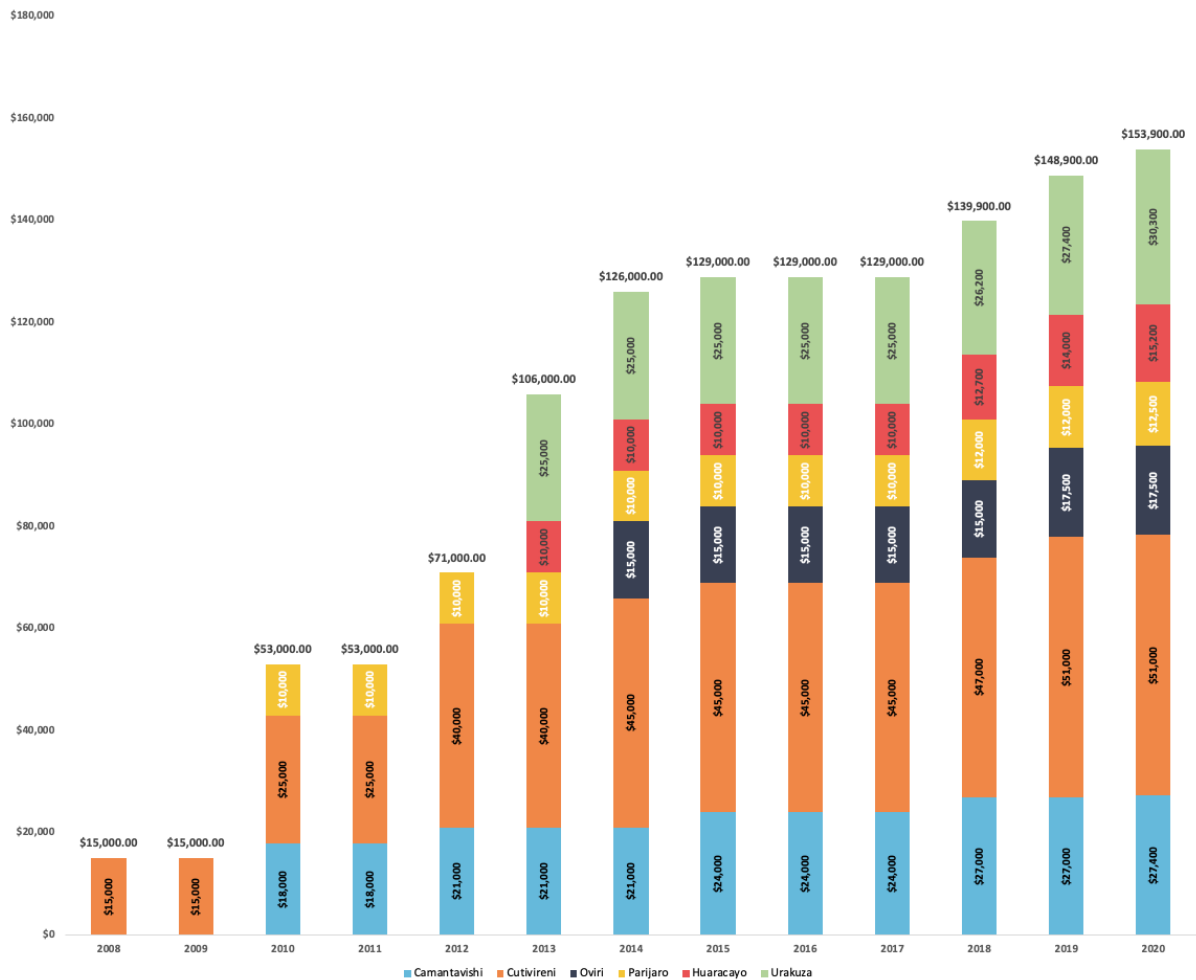


Figure 1. Amounts of committee giving per partnership from 2008 to 2020 (in USD).

We discuss issues with how funding amounts have been established and how they have increased inconsistently at a later stage in this document. We explain increases (and decreases) shown in **Figure 1** here:

1. Regular increase of funding for Cutivireni is possibly due to their privileged relationship with Cool Earth as being the first partnership⁷.
2. Increase in Camantavishi between 2014 and 2015 is due to the community acquiring more land. A similar event happened with Oviri in 2017.

⁷ As we will discuss later in this document, it does not mean that they are the partnership benefitting the most from funding from a per capita or per hectare basis.

3. In 2018, Yahuahua, a village belonging to the community of Urakuza, decided they wanted to leave the agreement with Cool Earth. As a result, total funding for Urakuza was lowered accordingly.
4. From 2018, budgets to support community boards and promoters were disbursed as bridge funding. Prior to this, these costs were separate. This explains a slight increase in bridge funding amounts.

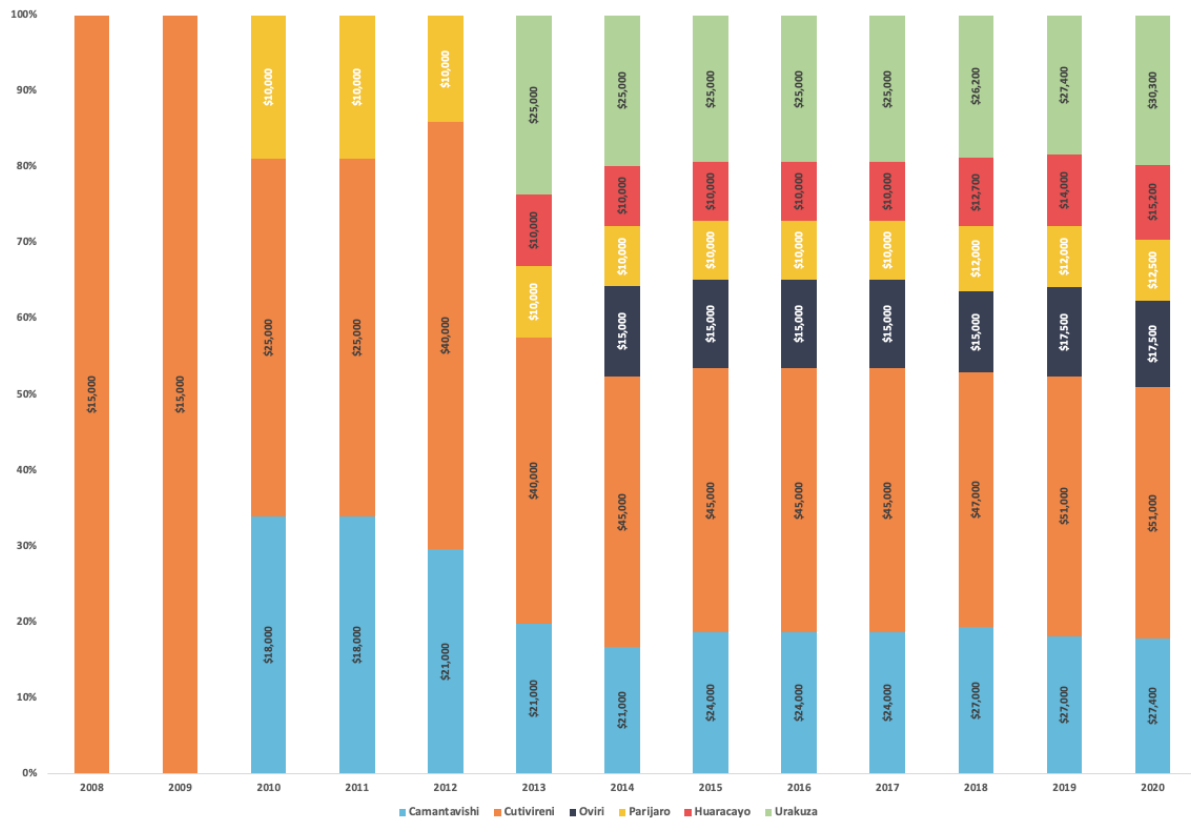


Figure 2. Distribution of committee giving per partnership from 2008 to 2020 (in %).

b. Where do committees invest the funding?

In 2019, staff in the UK attempted to analyse how bridge funding had been invested by all partnerships between 2008 and 2018. As discussed earlier, we cannot guarantee the accuracy of the data but a substantial amount of time was invested in going through records that are available. A breakdown of how partnerships have invested their funding is shown in **Figure 3**. Over a third of the funding was spent on understanding and adopting processes to adhere to Peruvian legal and fiscal frameworks (36%). 39% was invested in communal projects such as infrastructure, energy supply, transport and water, sanitation and hygiene (WaSH). A quarter of the funding (25%) was disbursed only to certain people such as cacao, coffee or fish producers, people requesting micro loans⁸, or families requesting help to pay for their children’s higher education⁹.

⁸ It is very rare for loans to be repaid back to the community association. A grant is probably a better term.

⁹ The majority of the investment on education is targeted at higher education, which happens outside the community. Very little of the funding goes to the state-run primary schools located in the communities.

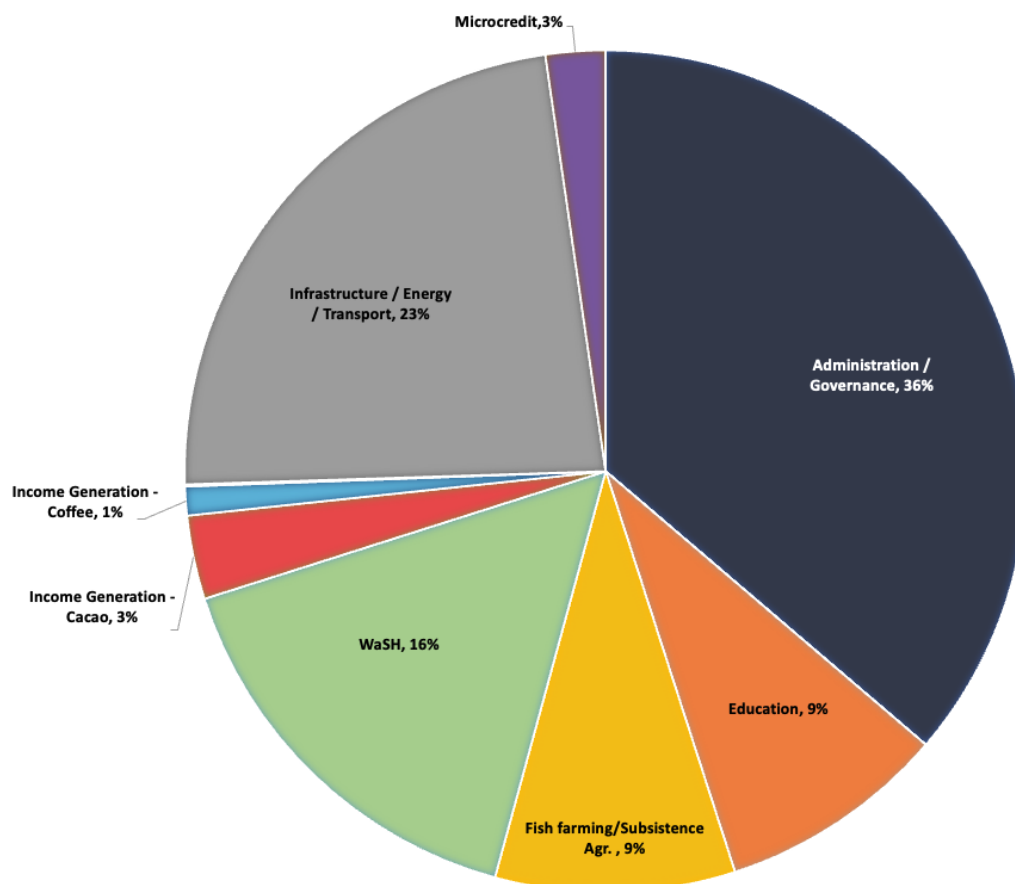


Figure 3. Distribution of funds across all partnerships from 2008 to 2018 (in %).

At the end of 2019, a new system for monitoring bridge funding was developed, with more relevant categories and more interactive functions to input data and obtain results. It was also decided not to merge the funding trackers of both Asháninka and Awajún partnerships but keep them separate.

Figures 4 and **5** show where communities have decided to invest their funding.

As the breakdowns for 2019 show, partnerships across both Asháninka and Awajún groups invested at least a quarter of their funding in administration and governance activities to ensure that the management of the funds complied with Peruvian frameworks. The Asháninka invested 28% (WaSH, communal support and transport) in communal projects and 48% on activities that benefited certain families to cover income generation, education and health. It is worth noting that health expenses mostly cover individual needs rather than communal health projects. For the Asháninka, traveling to the nearest cities to use health services is extremely costly. Individuals often request money to cover their travel to seek health support.

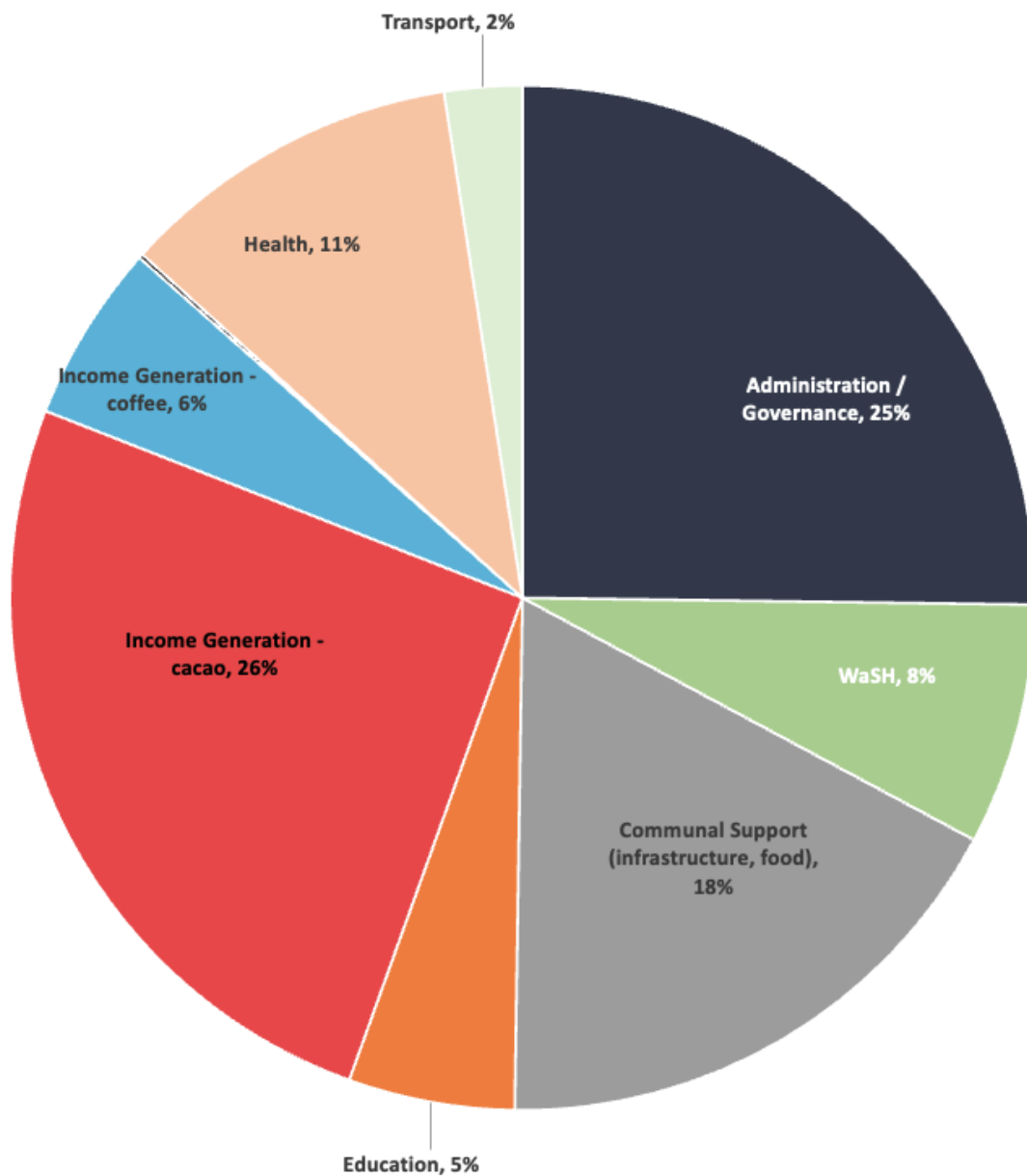


Figure 4. Distribution of funds for the Asháninka partnerships in 2019 (in %).

The Awajún, as shown in the figure below, invested 70% on projects and/or needs which benefited only certain families with income generation being a priority. The road connecting the Awajún partnerships to towns in the area means that income generating activities are much more of a priority than in, for example, the Asháninka partnerships, which live more remotely.

The reason as to why education and health tend to benefit individuals is because these are normally state funded and community boards prefer using the funds for projects in which funding is scarce.

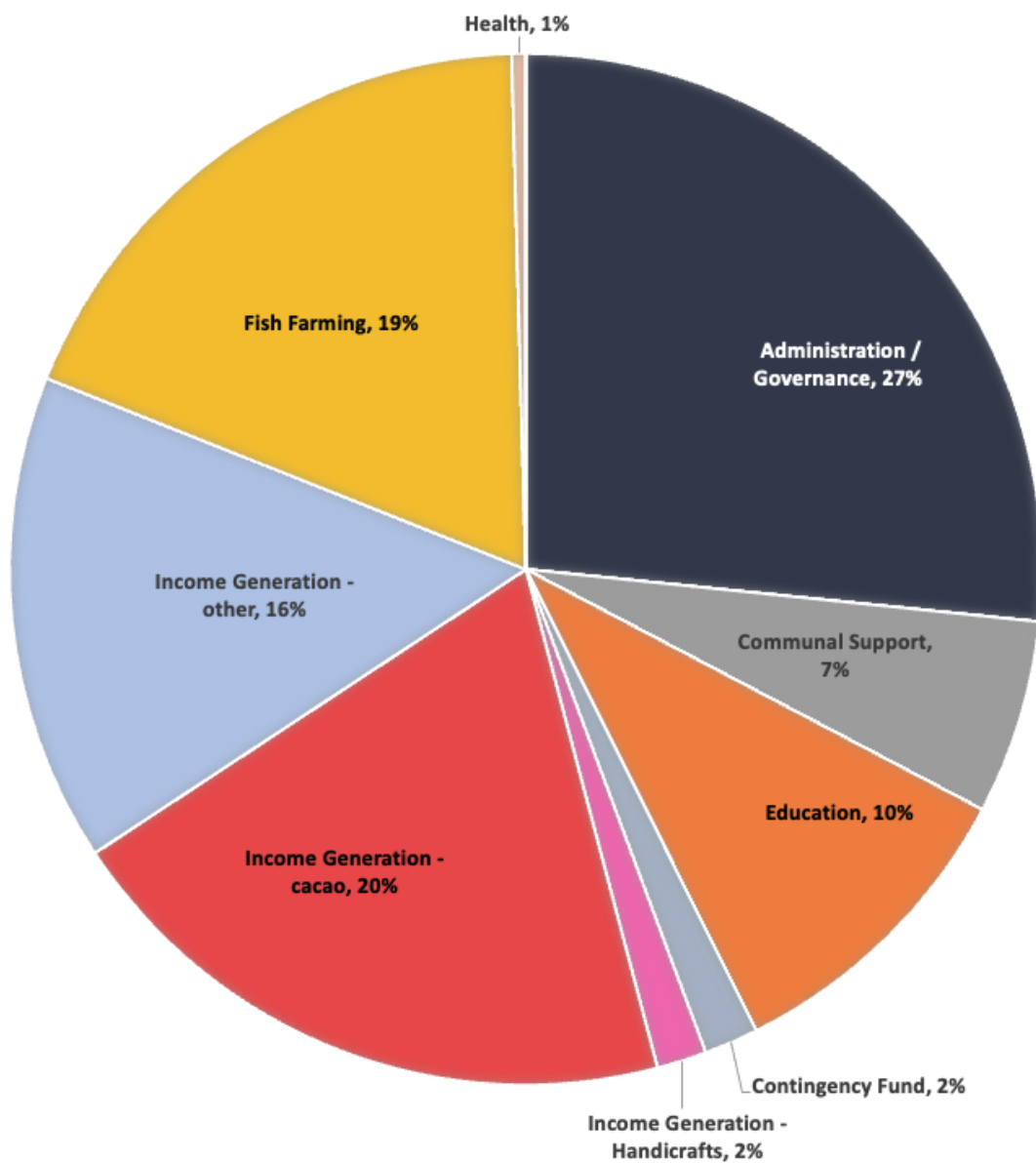


Figure 5. Distribution of funds for the Awajún partnerships in 2019 (in %).

Overall, investments for the year 2019 were varied. It was consistent with what was evaluated between 2008 and 2018 with communities spending a significant amount on respecting national processes before investing in identified priorities. Income generation tends to top the list followed by communal needs, health and/or education depending on the context.

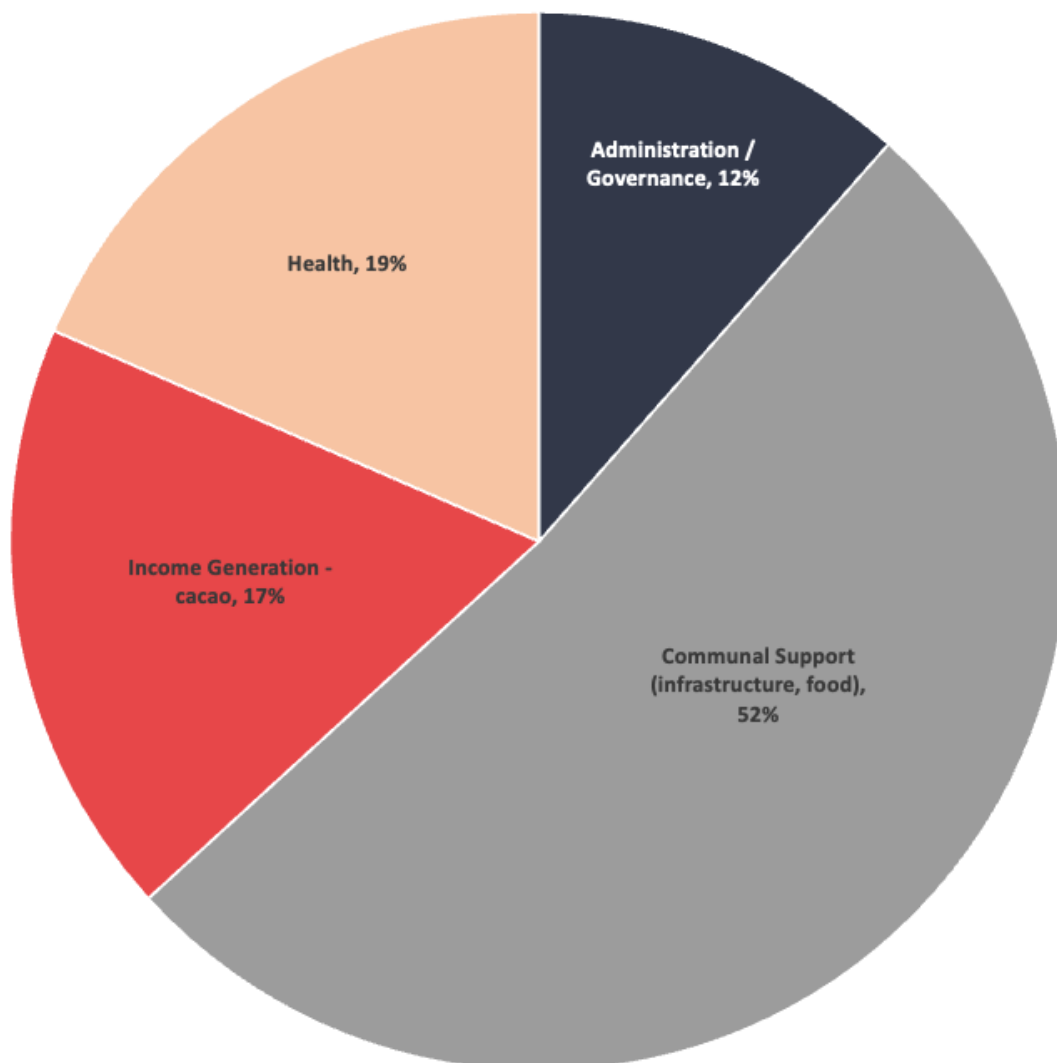


Figure 6. Distribution of funds for the Asháninka partnerships in 2020 (in %).

In 2020, the global health crisis affected the way communities invested their funding. With the relaxation of regulations (fiscal, financial, etc.), we observe in **Figures 6 and 7** a clear decrease in expenditure for administration and governance and a reallocation of funding to cover basic and communal needs. Food production due to local markets being inaccessible became the priority in both the Asháninka (short-cycled seeds¹⁰) and the Awajún (fish) partnerships. Health expenses rose with some also covering communal health needs given the fact regional governments were unable to support community health posts¹¹.

¹⁰ A separate project was created with the Asháninka to tackle food sovereignty in the context of Covid-19 as food shortages were rife.

¹¹ Cool Earth also supported health services through another pot of funding, separate from the committee giving fund (or bridge funding).

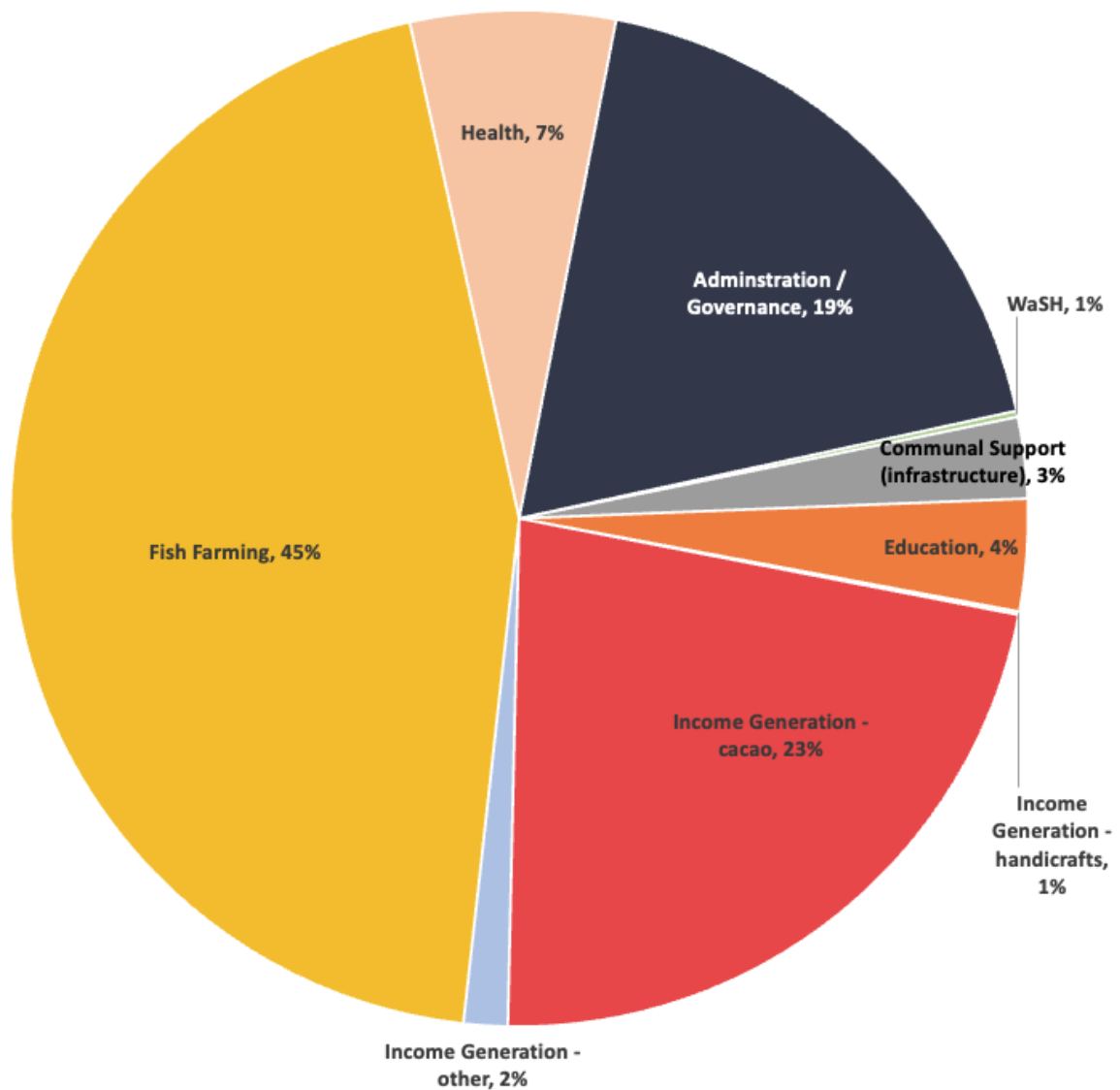


Figure 7. Distribution of funds for the Awajún partnerships in 2020 (in %).

The data in the pie charts for 2020 show less diverse investment patterns to ensure communal investments taking priority over individual needs. This makes a good case for flexible funding as communities were able to reallocate and prioritise funding without bureaucracy. The data also shows how contexts are different from one location to another which explains the differences in priorities and needs.

c. How much does it cost to run the committee giving project?

Excluding the funding that goes directly into the bank accounts of the community associations (S/. 495,734.65), Cool Earth budgeted S/. 465,819.57 to run the committee giving project for the financial year 2021/22¹².

¹² See [this](#) spreadsheet for calculations.

As discussed above in the design section, there are a number of Cool Earth staff members involved in the delivery of this project to ensure all stakeholders comply with Peru’s strict legal and fiscal structures. The costs we consider are those of the organisational support project, which are easily accessible in Peru’s budget tracker, and local staff time¹³.

Partnership	Project Cost (in S/.)	Share of Overheads (in S/.)	Grand Total (in S/.)
Camantavishi	84,709.38	90,419.35	175,128.73
Cutivireni	147,378.17	157,312.43	304,690.60
Oviri	70,467.10	75,217.04	145,684.14
Parijaro	40,229.60	42,941.34	83,170.94
Asháninka	342,784.25	365,890.16	708,674.41
Huaracayo	49,653.10	32,440.62	82,093.72
Urakuza	103,297.30	67,488.79	170,786.09
Awajún	152,950.40	99,929.41	252,879.81
Total 21/22	495,734.65	465,819.57	961,554.22

Table 1. Running costs of committee giving project in Peru 2021/22.

4. Reflections & lessons learned

a. How are the committee giving amounts calculated?

In the past, Peruvian staff had followed instructions from the UK team, explaining to the community that bridge funding amounts were calculated by a formula which accounted for both the area of their land title and the number of people living within it. In reality, no written records existed of how the UK team had made these decisions.

In 2017, the programmes team in the UK undertook a thorough quantitative analysis of how benefits have been previously distributed within the partnerships in order to inform how decisions should be made in the future. This is discussed below.

b. Inconsistent committee giving amounts

Increases to committee giving have been made at irregular intervals and inconsistently across partnerships. Concerns around how these decisions have been made in the past, how this has been justified to the communities and how to manage these increments for the future in the context of exit, warranted a secondary line of evaluation into how the funding is calculated.

Using area as the key determinant of committee giving payments, as shown in **Table 1** below, there is some variation in the amount of Peruvian soles per hectare paid to communities, with the amounts

¹³ These have been estimated rather than properly calculated.

in the Asháninka partnership showing greater consistency than neighbouring Urakuza and Huaracayo in the Awajún partnership. In all cases, except Huaracayo, partnerships receive a lower payment per hectare than they would from the PNCB (see 2.a.) which compensates communities S/.10.00 per hectare of forest conserved.

Name of Partnership	Partnership Area (Ha) ¹⁴	Committee Giving Amount (PEN)	Amount per hectare (PEN/Ha)
Camantavishi	17,961	80,147 (£16,062) ¹⁵	4.46 (£0.89)
Cutivireni	32,209	141,000 (£28,257)	4.38 (£0.88)
Oviri	9,751	62,848 (£12,595)	6.45 (£1.29)
Parijaro	7,213	35,800 (£7,174)	4.96 (£0.99)
Huaracayo	2,155	47,600 (£9,539)	22.09 (£4.43)
Urakuza	16,193	100,950 (£20,231)	6.23 (£1.25)

Table 2. Committee giving amounts per hectare in 2021 (PEN/Ha).

Using this approach to calculating bridge funding has its merits as it creates clear incentives for community members to conserve the forest; more forest conserved equals more funding.

However, in the context of the Cool Earth model, which seeks to tackle poverty as a key driver of deforestation, a more sophisticated approach is likely to be necessary. Poverty is not experienced in units of area, but rather on a personal level and as such purely compensating by area is unlikely to deliver the desired impact in communities with large populations and small land titles. Conceptually, it would therefore make sense to compensate communities based on per capita payments (**Table 2**).

Name of Partnership	Population ¹⁶	Committee Giving Amount (PEN)	Amount per person per year (PEN/person)
Camantavishi	648	80,147 (£16,062)	123.68 (£24.77)
Cutivireni	2104	141,000 (£28,257)	67.02 (£13.43)
Oviri	445	62,848 (£12,595)	141.23 (£28.30)
Parijaro	99	35,800 (£7,174)	361.62 (£72.47)
Huaracayo	293	47,600 (£9,539)	162.46 (£32.56)
Urakuza	1040	100,950 (£20,231)	97.07 (£19.45)

Table 3. Committee giving amounts per capita in 2021 (PEN/Ha).

¹⁴ Partnership area obtained on the Forest Monitoring Dashboard [here](#).

¹⁵ Exchange rate taken on Feb 1. 2021 when the Cool Earth financial year begins (1 GBP = 4.9899 PEN).

¹⁶ Population data obtained [here](#).

The calculation of committee giving according to population size shows even greater variation than when current amounts of funding is justified by area. To transparently use population size as the key determinant of committee giving, Cool Earth would have to take some corrective action to ensure fairness across the programme.

The difference between Parijaro and Urakuza is especially troubling considering the context of these two communities on the ground. To an extent the extreme remoteness and steep topography of the Parijaro partnership renders it somewhat protected from the threat of loggers or miners. Conversely, the road running directly through Urakuza and its relatively flat terrain make the likelihood of deforestation much greater. The current payments do not reflect the relative pressures on the forest.

However, even if these discrepancies were corrected, calculation based on population alone would mean that partnerships obtaining land extensions, such as Oviri and Camantavish, would not be rewarded.

Another approach was considered by the former programme team given the need to incorporate the merits of each approach, the positive incentivisation of forest conservation by calculation using area and the theoretical advantages of tackling poverty more effectively when calculating by population size. In fact, payments per capita per hectare reflect how the UK team have explained to the Peruvian staff and communities that bridge funding has been calculated in the past, accounting for both area and population size.

Results of this approach still showed inconsistencies in payments and no clear incentive for greater forest protection.

Still today, Peruvian staff pressured by community members ask that the UK clarify how the funding is calculated, increased and/or decreased. We are currently exploring methodologies used in the field of poverty reduction by Give Directly, namely the minimum expenditure basket formula¹⁷ if we were to direct payments to households and individuals but also at the communal level.

c. The forest agreement

As Cool Earth formally developed its operations in-country and replicated its model outside the Cutivireni partnership, a couple of issues emerged:

1. There was a noticeable lack of understanding from community members of the connection between their funding and the conservation of the forest;
2. Conditions, relating to financial and fiscal regulations in-country, had to be explicitly stated to relieve field staff delivering this project.

As a result, forest agreements were put in place. Our earliest record of a forest agreement in 2014¹⁸ under Ecotribal management, shows six conditions that the partnerships needed to adhere to in order to receive Cool Earth funding. Instructions on how to manage their forest, to use the funding

¹⁷ Klein N., Warring N. 2021. *Demystifying the Minimum Expenditure Basket: Reflections from CaLP and WFP's joint webinar series on MEBs*, The Cash Learning Partnership, viewed 30 March 2021. <https://www.calpnetwork.org/blog/demystifying-the-minimum-expenditure-basket/>

¹⁸ An example of the 2014 forest agreement in Spanish with Asháninka partnerships can be found [here](#).

and reporting were clearly explicated. It was rewritten in 2015¹⁹ when Cool Earth began operating in Peru adding two new conditions detailing the process for reporting and how the committee should function (2 year terms). These conditions remained unchanged until 2020²⁰.

Since 2018, greater scrutiny by the Peruvian government has been placed on donations to remote areas of the Amazon, particularly in the military controlled area of the VRAEM (Valle de los Ríos Apurímac, Ene y Mantaro) in which are located Cool Earth's Asháninka partnerships. Plans to redraft forest agreements began at this stage to reflect governmental regulations and support field teams in charge of supporting this project. Current forest agreements are signed with twelve conditions that partnerships must adhere to. It is important to note that no action is taken by Cool Earth for "misuse" of the forest but that payments are delayed if community associations do not present the appropriate documentation to report to authorities on time.

d. Elite capture

It is still the case that the committee giving approach is susceptible to elite capture, with powerful families benefitting more than those based in remote villages. Over the years, steps have been taken to address this by the local teams with some success. Extensive support and some training have been given to the community associations warranting some improvements in management of the fund, although these efforts must be renewed with each change of the members on the committee.

To increase awareness of the funding and the forest agreement, field teams now attempt to travel to as many remote villages as possible to present what the funds have been used for in the previous year and ask the villagers if they would like to renew the forest agreement. This increased awareness of the fund has improved the distribution of the use of funding towards greater amounts being spent in the outlying villages, rather than entirely in the principal settlements in each community.

In the past, there has been misunderstanding of how committee giving has been distributed between the villages, with partnerships assuming Cool Earth were responsible for this decision. The message that this decision is the responsibility of the community eventually led to a fairer division between villages.

In addition, the position of Spokesperson was created within the committee of the community associations. These individuals are resident in remote villages and are paid a small stipend to attend community meetings in the principal settlement (for example Cutivireni Centro) and then report back to their village. However, the Satipo team reported that this has had limited success as although individuals may attend meetings, the knowledge transfer on return to their village did not happen.

e. Each partnership is different and Peruvian bureaucracy could be considered discriminatory

There are several key differences between the partnerships which pose new challenges for implementation. Most notably, Urakuza and the villages within it are reachable by road, just a five hour drive from Bagua (in contrast to the two hour drive and eight hour boat ride taken to reach the

¹⁹ An example of the 2015 forest agreement in Spanish with Cutivireni can be found [here](#).

²⁰ An example of the 2020 forest agreement in Spanish with Cutivireni can be found [here](#).

first river port entrance to Cutivireni in the Asháninka partnership, from which the villages and other communities can be a further day's walk). But besides easier access for the Bagua team, the road has brought with it external economic and social factors which need to be considered in the design and implementation of the partnership. A similar argument can be said of the Asháninka partnerships with Cutivireni being more accessible than Parijaro. As a result, threats, needs and solutions are different.

Another challenge that we encounter, year on year, is how to instil key skills in the committees, when the state processes are often inconsistent, poorly implemented and open to corruption. Communicating the need to comply with public processes in Peru that clash with indigenous systems in order to receive Cool Earth funding is problematic. Especially because for the most part they do not impact the day to day lives of individual community members who have other more pressing needs.

5. Useful resources

[Peru - Country Evaluation 2017](#)

[Forest Area of Interests for Asháninka partnerships](#)

[Forest Area of Interests for Awajún partnerships](#)