

Guyana

Securing and Enhancing Land Tenure in Guyana

Legal history

- Before Guyana gained independence from British rule in 1966, various ordinances and regulations spelt out how Indigenous Peoples were governed. Later, the Amerindian Lands Commission Report of 1969 and the Amerindian Act of 1976 provided some guidance on titling of indigenous communities. The latter had many limitations. Succeeding laws continue to have limitations.
- Just before independence, indigenous land rights fighter, Stephen Campbell, lobbied the Queen for recognition of rights. The 1967 Amerindian Lands Commission was a result of this. Since then, Indigenous Peoples, individually and collectively have pushed for legal recognition of land and other rights with revisions of the Amerindian Act taking place from time to time and with some recognition also being included in the Constitution of Guyana. There are still many shortcomings in the laws.
- That there was the need for improvement in the laws governing Indigenous Peoples in Guyana and also in their application and that this fitted in with what Tenure Facility could do provided the perfect opportunity for collaboration. That the government and other partners were also willing to collaborate was also important in moving the project forward. Networking with international partners also helped to create the opportunity.

From 01 June 2019

To 30 June 2021

Budget

US\$1,656,000



Proponents

Amerindian Peoples Association
(APA)

South Rupununi District Council
(SRDC)



Amerindian Peoples Association
Our Land Our Life





Outcomes

- The land of at least six indigenous communities are titled or extended, and demarcated.
- The 2006 Amerindian Act is replaced by an improved Act.

Activities

- Review of available data in target villages to be titled and demarcated.
- Submission of land title applications to the Ministry of Indigenous Peoples Affairs.
- Compile and validate (through District Councils) the report of consultations with indigenous communities on the Act.
- Provide inputs from field consultations and experience to officials drafting the Act.

Expected results

- List of target communities confirmed and updated.
- Land title claims submitted to the Ministry of Indigenous Peoples' Affairs.
- Evidence compiled to contribute to development of the revised Act.





Wapichannao Proposed Title Extensions

PE = Proposed Extension

Current Status

Consultation with communities and governments have revealed:

- That communities have substantive and important contributions to make towards legislative protections of their rights.
- That communities can benefit even more from capacity building and awareness education.
- That there is need for some forms of collaboration with government especially that they are generally the main legislators of a country.

Key design elements of the project include:

- Project is relevant and has high priority for responding to protection of indigenous rights.
- Beneficiary participation in project development.

Of note:

- The project is at its early stage of implementation.

