



## What we do in Peru

- We've improved the quality of education for 25,000 children
- We helped 40,000 children take part in events, media work, lobbying and advocacy activities during the Global Action Week for the Right to Education



Almost 28 million people live in Peru and children make up 38% of the population. Although the country is fairly rich – it exports copper, gold, zinc and oil – the majority of its population are poor. A small elite, mainly of colonial Spanish descent, controls most of the wealth and political power. Indigenous Peruvians make up many of the millions who live in poverty.

Children in the poorest areas – city slums, the Andean Highlands and the Amazon rainforest – are 10 to 12 times more likely to die before their fifth birthday than the children of the richest 20%. Many do not get enough good food to eat, cannot get treatment when they are ill and drop out of school.

### Save the Children in Peru

We began working in Peru in 1980. Over the past year, Save the Children UK, Save the Children Sweden and Save the Children Spain have joined together to form one body – Save the Children in Peru.

We work mainly through 24 partners, in the poorest areas of the country – Junín, Huancavelica, Ayacucho, Cusco, Apurímac, Ica and Lima. We help children to get a good education, to grow up without fear of violence, and to have a say in decisions that affect their lives.

## **We're helping children get a better education**

Almost all children start primary school but nearly a third of children living in towns and almost half of those in rural areas end up dropping out. The quality of education they receive is often poor. There's a particular problem for children growing up speaking a language other than Spanish, which is what's used in lessons. Girls and children with disabilities are most likely to miss out on school altogether.

Last year we improved the quality of education for 25,000 children. In 2009, we plan to enable 1,200 children to go to school for the first time.

## **We're raising the quality of education for all pupils**

We've worked with 600 teachers in Ayacucho, Junín, Huancavelica and Cusco. We've trained them in methods which enable them to get their pupils really involved in their learning and to control their classes without harsh punishment. We've also helped them to find ways to make all children feel welcome and able to learn in school, whatever their background or ability.

Together with children, teachers and parents, we've developed standards to make clear what a quality education means, so that they will be better able to hold the system to account.

## **We're breaking down language barriers**

A significant minority – 19% – of school-age children have grown up speaking a language other than Spanish, most commonly a dialect of Quechua. We're working to ensure that Quechua-speaking girls and boys in the Andean Highlands have access to a quality primary education in both Quechua and Spanish.

Our partners have developed bilingual and intercultural lessons and materials to help Quechua children succeed in school. We're working with parents to promote bilingual education for their children and strengthening links between all the different organisations involved.

The importance of bilingual education is gaining greater official recognition. The region of Ayacucho has recognised Quechua and Asháninka as official languages alongside Spanish. The regional government of Huancavelica has set up a committee to work out how best to implement bilingual education; our partner Educa is a member.

## **We're enabling more disabled children to go to school**

Nearly 90% of children with disabilities don't attend school, although Peruvian law states that children with moderate or slight disabilities should receive the same basic education as

everyone else. Few school buildings are adapted to their needs, teachers have not been trained and some students and parents still hold discriminatory attitudes.

We're working to ensure that children with disabilities have access to quality basic education, and that national and regional governments implement the law on inclusive education. We're also encouraging parents to support the inclusion of children with disabilities in mainstream education.

In Junín and Huancavelica, volunteers from our partner JCCM Arguedianos trained 680 headteachers and teachers from 40 schools on how they can make their schools more welcoming for children with disabilities. Eighteen schools have begun to make changes to their buildings and environment, and three have built ramps for wheelchair access. We've held awareness-raising discussions with student organisations in 40 schools on 'inclusive education and disability'.

We're also improving coordination between disability organisations and those working more generally for children's right to education, so that they all promote the implementation of the law on inclusive education.

### **We're promoting the provision of preschool education**

Only 2% of children under three years old have access to preschool. We want young children growing up in the Andean Highlands, in particular, to have access to good quality care that develops their personality and talents.

We're working with parents and communities so that they recognise the importance of preschool programmes and support their implementation. We're working with the local authority staff responsible for the care of children under five to promote the participation of children in these programmes. We're helping our partner organisation to get members of the local community involved in the design and provision of preschool programmes.

### **We're protecting children**

#### **We're keeping children safe from violence**

Physical punishment is common in Peru. Many children say that their parents hit them and humiliate them. We want to ensure that children are raised by parents and teachers using positive discipline.

We're part of the 'Good Treatment' movement, which is arguing for a law banning physical punishment and policies that will ensure the law is implemented. In the past year, Congress made a multi-party declaration to end physical and humiliating punishment, in response to lobbying by networks of child-led organisations and organisations for the rights of the child.

## **We're helping to build a decentralised protection system**

Peru's 25 regional governments are starting to develop decentralised protection systems. Next year we will meet with decision-makers in the areas where we work to develop strategies to improve child protection services.

Together with our partners, we're working to monitor the plans put in place regionally for children and, in particular, the services aimed at preventing violence against children.

In Cusco, we supported our partner Codeni to set up 14 child protection networks. They trained 540 children and young people in rights, communication, participation and budget management.

We've formed a close relationship with the Peruvian Ombudsperson for Children and in the next year we'll support an Ombudsperson report on the quality of protection services.

## **HIV and AIDS**

It's estimated that 0.6% of Peruvians are infected with HIV, mostly adults aged between 24 and 35. Over the past seven years we've worked with young people in schools to prevent the further spread of HIV and AIDS.

Through the decentralised regional protection schemes, we're now improving access to services for children with HIV and AIDS, especially orphans, and working with the staff providing those services.

We've carried out a study to identify what factors prevent children affected by HIV and AIDS and their families from getting the help or treatment they need. We're now working with other organisations to find ways to remove these obstacles.

In the coming year, we're supporting six health institutes to provide care to children affected by HIV and AIDS and their families.

## **We're promoting children's participation**

Children have worked to promote democracy and public monitoring of education policies in Ayacucho in Peru. They've also engaged politicians, decision-makers and the media in a campaign against physical punishment of children. Child-led organisations are a key part of the 'Good Treatment' coalition, which we're working through to ban corporal punishment.

We're getting children involved at all stages, and 22,600 children took part in events, media work, lobbying and advocacy activities during the Global Action Week for the Right to Education.

This year, we'll provide direct support to child-led organisations to develop their capacity to campaign for children's rights and to take part in meaningful dialogues at regional and national level on issues that affect them and their communities, such as violence, punishment and education.

We're also helping children organise themselves to take part in the way their schools are run.

## We're responding to emergencies

In August 2007 an earthquake destroyed 40,000 homes and killed more than 500 people in the area south of Lima. Our work focused in Ica and in Chincha. We helped in Pueblo Nuevo, a poor suburb of Chincha, where more than 95% of houses were destroyed. We provided building materials, tools and technical advice to help 800 families build a basic house, which they would later be able to improve or extend. We set up 60 centres for children and trained local community assistants to government standards to look after them, so enabling them to earn some money with which to rebuild their lives. The centres gave 1,200 children a safe place to play and be looked after. We also helped build a health centre, used by 8,000 people; the government has agreed to provide staff and running costs.

In Ica, our partner, Save the Children in Peru, helped 2,500 children affected by the earthquake. They repaired schools and trained teachers, and built 14 playgrounds. And they provided art therapy for children to help them deal with the distress they experienced during the quake.

In the high Andean region of Peru (covering Apurímac, Ayacucho, Cusco, Huancavelica and Junín, among others), people frequently endure extreme cold waves in the winter months (June, July and August) with temperatures as low as -25°C. In June 2007, the government declared a state of emergency in response to the cold wave.

We helped respond to the extreme weather by providing healthcare to children in the areas where we work, and supporting people to maintain their livelihoods and incomes.



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