



## ABOUT US

Founded in August 2007 as an official Peruvian charity by Sonia Newhouse, Living Heart Peru is a not-for-profit organization. We support remote, impoverished highland communities above the Sacred Valley in Peru by providing better nutrition and opportunities for education to primary school children, as well as basic health and dental care, and organic agriculture for the community as a whole. Our challenge is to continue to support vulnerable children, abandoned elderly, women and men to help provide a better quality of life & a brighter future

## THE SITUATION IN THE HIGH-ANDES

The huge variations in weather in the highland communities, along with the problems caused by altitude and poor soil, mean that the only crops that can be cultivated are root vegetables – namely, the potato. Because of the remoteness and the difficult access to these communities, the infrastructure there is very poor and the education limited. Income generating activities are practically non-existent.

This leads to malnourished children suffering from all manner of problems – low body weight, small for their age, listless, lacking in energy and struggling to stay awake in class. Many of these children also have to walk several hours down the mountain to school every day, nearly always on an empty stomach. Persistent diarrhea caused by polluted parasitic water supplies compounds their malnutrition.

Access to the communities can be very difficult, especially in the rainy season, due to nonexistent or poor road maintenance. Additionally, the language and cultural barrier between these Quechua-speaking villages and the Spanish-speaking towns and cities below further exacerbates the isolation and lack of support for these Peruvian-Andean people.

## HOW DO WE HELP?

What would you do with S/. 1.80(\$0.60 or €0.55)? That's how much it costs Living Heart Peru to feed one child every day.

For centuries, these remote communities have been marginalized and ignored. Living Heart Peru advocates the right of every child to health, education and a brighter future. Our aim is to develop

holistic, sustainable projects that work together with the community in the areas of Nutrition, Health, Education and Sustainable Agriculture. Through working collaboratively alongside the most disadvantaged local people we aim to create a more sustainable, long-term solution.

Living Heart is not a hand-out organisation. We empower local children, women and men to help themselves and help others. We operate with integrity and compassion, using local produce and solutions, keeping it simple to achieve results.

*"The projects not only help the children, but empower them to help themselves which is often lacking in pure charity."* Paul CRIPPS & Carol THOMAS, owners of Amazonas Explorer Travel Agency

*"Living Heart Peru is the most highly respected NGO that I have come across. Their reputation locally is one of an NGO that uses a logical, clear method to achieve measureable results and who are both honest in dealing with the local population and open in the transmission of their ideals to the general public. The ethos of Living Heart really shines through in their publicity material and the attitude of the staff – it is obvious that they really care about making a difference."* Sally Morris, Owner and General Manager, The Real McCoy

## Nutritional Support

*Imagine eating only potatoes for breakfast, lunch, and dinner every single day. Living Heart Peru provides hot and nutritious food to several hundred high-Andean children every day of the school year.*



Through a process of careful evaluation, Living Heart Peru identifies communities where a large percentage of the children are suffering from chronic malnutrition, growth problems and health issues related to a lack of dietary diversity. We provide several hundred community primary schoolchildren with a hot meal every school day of the year. We design special recipes to ensure that the children are receiving a nutritionally-varied diet, based on a wide variety of fresh foods rich in essential nutrients.

Living Heart Peru builds appropriate kitchens and trains local cooks from the communities to prepare the food for the children – with all kitchens having smoke chimneys to avoid common eye, lung and respiratory infections. The community must fulfill their responsibilities by providing volunteers to aid the cook in the preparation of the food, and fuel the school kitchen fire from a sustainable source. Additionally, local anti-parasitic herbs are prepared as a hot drink and provided to the children bi-weekly or added to soups and salads.



*"The children have changed a lot. They are now a better height and weight and you can clearly see the difference in their health. Several mothers have also commented that now their stomachs are no longer bad as a cause of the cold food that was harming them."* - Alberto Yarin, community school director

*"Here (a primary school supported by Living Heart Peru) was a wonderful example, what a proper nutrition can do for children. Instead of a listless, apathetic, lethargic group of children, this was a joyful, playing, running bunch of kids, outgoing and interested in what was happening around them."*

- Emmy, a visitor to our communities

## Health



Living Heart Peru collects new and secondhand clothes and provides regular donations of warm items to the communities. Every little bit really does help – as the children trek down to school in the mornings, the men toil in the fields and the women collect wood or sheep droppings for the fire, they will have an extra layer to wear beneath their traditional clothing to help fight off the biting cold and whistling winds.

In the Andes, basic medicines to treat and prevent escalation of minor illnesses are limited and health centers are often several hours' walk away. Living Heart Peru provides a basic first aid kit and medical supplies to the school director, for the benefit of the children and the wider community, with instructions on dosage and when to administer each medicine. Living Heart Peru also organizes a yearly itinerant medical clinic with the help of foreign volunteer doctors and nurses, who bring their own medical supplies. Finally, Living Heart Peru conducts annual weight and height checks to monitor the growth of the children, and track their development.



In addition to our health programme, we are currently introducing a dental care programme for our communities. In the meantime, we are collecting children's toothbrushes, which we distribute on a regular basis to the schools and our local nurse teaches alternatives to toothpastes to the children and the school teachers.

*"The herbs that we provide mean that the children do not suffer as regularly from parasites and that their stomachs are not so swollen by not being able to digest their food properly. The recipes we use are really nutritious and in several communities you can see an impressive increase in the energy and strength of the children. They also have more strength to fight off illnesses, colds and common infections that were much more dangerous before for their health. It is not just the food that helps to combat these infections but also the existence of basic medication to treat these problems early. I think that the provision of these medicines for the communities has made a big change in the quality of life of the people in the countryside, because if it wasn't for these medicines they would have to walk for hours to reach the nearest medical centre."*

- Rita Olivera Año, local nurse and herbalist



## Educational Support

Living Heart Peru believes that it is through a continued education that the children of the highland communities can gain a foothold on the ladder to a brighter future. We believe that the opportunities a good education brings, can help shatter the vicious circle of poverty and hardship.



In many community primary schools the teachers struggle to fulfill their obligation to teach the national curriculum due to poor attendance, low energy levels of the children, lack of basic resources and the sheer difficulty of teaching in such remote, inhospitable environments. Every family is required by the State to provide each of their children with basic stationary such as a notepad and a pencil but, when family sizes are so large and earnings so small, it is often easier for the children to stay at home than to attend school with nothing to write with and nothing to write on.

Living Heart Peru provides all our community primary schools with discretionary basic educational supplies to ensure that every child can attend school for the full scholastic year and receive a basic education. We also provide volunteer teachers to teach art, drama, physical recreation activities, music and environmental conservation. Living Heart Peru has also launched a mobile lending-library campaign where we make suitable books available to children who are interested in extra study. We work in association with the school directors and provide books in both Quechua and Spanish which are delivered to the remote villages with the regular food supply deliveries.

*"We have noticed amongst all the teachers that the children now concentrate better in their classes and have more energy to learn and to play because of the fact that they receive this hot food twice a day."* - Dionicio Mozo Huaman, community school director

## Sustainable Agriculture



To expand the benefits of the Nutrition program to the whole community and ensure all children have access to nutritious food within the home, Living Heart Peru has started its Educational Greenhouse Project. This involves the construction of a large greenhouse close to the school, allowing the community to organically cultivate their own fresh vegetables, salad and herbs.

To combat frost, poor soil and the effects of high altitude, Living Heart Peru uses a specially-designed thermal mass greenhouse built from local stone and mud. An insulated plastic roof is installed to contain the heat of the sun during the day, and maintain temperatures during the freezing nights.

The key to Living Heart Peru's sustainable agriculture project is long-term education and practical, on-the-job training for the children and adults of the community. The members of the project will receive monthly training workshops, and weekly theoretical and practical classes on nutrition and cultivation.

We are running this project with the hope of constructing greenhouses in all of our communities, but we need everything from the building materials to the seeds. Please take a look at our Wish List on our web page to see how even the smallest amount can make a big difference.

*"This greenhouse is the first one to produce such a variety of plants. This greenhouse produces very healthy and nutritious vegetables...I would like to have my own family greenhouse, so I can give fresh and healthy food to all my children every day, because it will help them to grow healthy and have better results at school." - Sabina Cruz Mamani, 41 years old, widow with 6 children*

*"This greenhouse is very beneficial for us. We are learning how to cultivate our own organic vegetables at an altitude, where only potatoes would grow before." - Fredy Melo Cruz from a high altitude community in the Sacred Valley, married, 2 little children*

## Disability Assistance



In impoverished families, where children of all ages are expected to lend a hand with the daily tasks, a disabled child is seen as a drain on the family's meager resources and a problem that many families simply do not know how to deal with. In some cases disabled children are found locked in darkened rooms or chained to beds by desperate parents who know no other way to care for their child.

Living Heart Peru believes that through therapy, love and care disabled children from impoverished families can be given the affection, respect and help that they so deserve.

## Contraception

**Living Heart Peru's** aim is that every woman who wishes to can gain the knowledge and opportunity to take control of their own family planning.



Women represent over half of the population in Peru, but they do not have equal access to resources or power. High levels of domestic abuse and alcoholism exist in the communities – aggravated by minimal income, unwanted pregnancies and the incredible hardship of their daily lives.

In rural communities in Peru an average family has 7 children, one small house and a lot of mouths to feed. Women often marry young, and with access to sexual education being practically non-existent, multiple pregnancies often puts the women at grave risk of health problems and places the family as a whole under tremendous financial strain.

**Living Heart Peru** provides sexual health, hygiene and education workshops in all of our communities and offers pill and injection-based contraceptives to all women who request them. The contraceptive program has given women access to sexual education that was not available previously and has allowed them to make informed, empowered choices about their future reproduction. With less unwanted pregnancies, the women report less violence against them, less alcoholism and better family relations.

## Children's Home



We are actively seeking the right plot of land around the Cusco area which will allow us to liaise and integrate with the right community, creating a strong relationship with them; a self- sustaining home working in harmony with nature and the neighbouring community. We aim to build a Children's Home for around 40 abandoned and orphaned children from the Andean highlands, where they will live in an ecologically sensitive environment, will be treated with much love and affection and will receive essential life-skills. By incorporating permaculture principles the home will benefit not only the children but the community as a whole. We are keen that the children, as they grow, maintain their traditional roots, respecting their culture and are socially responsible; these are core values of ours. Our aim is to educate professional and culturally sensitive people, who will be the next change makers and community leaders in the remote highland communities we currently work with. We wish them to be full and active members of their society, wherever their strengths may lie. To this end we will employ local people with the necessary skills supported by us to help the children reach their potential.

Read more about Living Heart's projects at [www.livingheartperu.org](http://www.livingheartperu.org)



## HOW CAN YOU GET INVOLVED?

### Donate to us

**Donations** of school supplies, clothing, medicines toothbrushes and toothpaste, creative games, and books (Spanish and Quechua) are appreciated. For more items needed by the Andean highland communities please contact us at [livingheartperu@gmail.com](mailto:livingheartperu@gmail.com) or see our Wish List on our website, [www.livingheartperu.org](http://www.livingheartperu.org).

*Note: Please do not send such items via post if weight is more than 2 kg as they may incur tax duties that Living Heart Peru is unable to pay. If you wish to send clothes by post please ensure that they look as new, as secondhand clothes are not accepted by customs. Please mark the value of any items as less than \$100. For more information Please ask the staff or write to us at [livingheartperu@gmail.com](mailto:livingheartperu@gmail.com).*

**Cash Donations** which allow us to finance our projects (food, medicines, doctors, greenhouses, vegetable seeds, transportation/car, staff, etc) can be made directly at our office in Pisac, via our donation boxes at selected Cafés/Restaurants/Hotels or via bank transfer into the following:

#### **Bank account in Peru (in USD)**

##### **Name of account holder:**

Asociación civil Living Heart Peru

**Name of Bank:** Banco de Crédito del Perú  
(BCP)

**Address:** Av. La Cultura A2, ex Seminario  
Antonio Abad, Cusco, Peru

**Bank account number:** 285-2188929-1-88

**Swift Code:** BCPLPEPL

### Volunteer for us

Living Heart Peru is constantly looking for independent, skilled, mature, compassionate and dedicated volunteers to help us in the field, from the office, or from home. Please contact us at [livingheartperu@gmail.com](mailto:livingheartperu@gmail.com) for more information about available volunteer opportunities.

### Fundraise for us

At Living Heart Peru we appreciate that not everyone is able to make a donation out of their own pockets. But why not fundraise? Organizing your own event is a great way to make a difference and there are many fun and creative ways to do it. Please consult us for more ideas and details.

### Recommend us

Living Heart Peru is a small but dedicated grassroots organization. The key to our expanding list of followers is positive recommendations. Word of mouth helps spread our message! Talk to your friends, colleagues & family about our mission and our Projects.

## Find Us Online

For up-to-date news, events, photos and more, check out our Blog and newsletter which all support the aim of our small NGO – we're happy for anyone to visit them or pass them along to friends. Finally, we're online at Facebook (Living Heart Peru) and Twitter (@livingheartperu). So why don't you jump onboard and follow us!

## Get in Touch!

Living Heart prides itself on its openness and transparency. For further information please get in touch at [livingheartperu@gmail.com](mailto:livingheartperu@gmail.com) or visit [www.livingheartperu.org](http://www.livingheartperu.org).



# THANK YOU!