We at Andean Alliance and everyone here in Yurac Yacu, Peru extend our warm wishes to all our supporters for a safe and fulfilling Holiday Season! None of what we’ve accomplished and continue to do here would be possible without the support of our partners, donors, volunteers and friends from around the world. In particular the support of our Canadian partner, the Sombrilla International Development Society (Sombrilla) has been vital to our success. We are sincerely grateful for everyone’s support and for sharing our conviction that people are this world’s greatest resource and those willing to work hard to improve their lives deserve an opportunity to do so. Only with the human ingenuity and spirit we’ve cultivated can we face the challenges that lie ahead.

**YURAC YACU COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CENTER**

Follow us on Facebook: yuracyacucommunitydevelopmentcenter

This is our main multi-year project whose objective is to develop a self-sustaining Community Education and Small Business Center that provides education and training to community residents in addition to work opportunities and family income. Construction of the Center was completed in 2014 and it includes an Early Childhood Education program, a Library & Computer Center, the Yurac Yacu Community Café and the Yurac Yacu Knitting Cooperative workshop. Our goal is to see the Center become financially self-sustaining with income from the small businesses covering the Center’s operating costs, mainly the early education program and computer room. At that point it will be formally transferred to the Yurac Yacu Cooperative Association.

Our main focus in 2019 has been on the promotion and strengthening of the community small businesses. While most of the income earned by the community small businesses goes to local residents for their labor, a percentage of the revenues earned are retained to help cover the operating costs of the Center.

Following is a summary of the achievements of the community small businesses and the education programs at the Yurac Yacu Center in 2019.

**YURAC YACU CAFE**

2019 was the Café’s 4th year of operations (June to September). In this period the Café brought in revenues of $4,454.00 USD, provided 3 months employment to 6 local women and earned a profit of $448.00. The YY Café’s profits and number of customers has grown by over 55% since its inception and is now ranked as the 17th best restaurant in the Huaraz area. We are aiming for #1!
WOMEN’S KNITTING COOPERATIVE

The Women's Knitting Cooperative was formally registered as a small business in 2015 and has been receiving training in the administration of their business in addition to ongoing skill development for designs, finishing and natural dyes. The group consists of 12 women of different skill levels. All the women are members of the Yurac Yacu Community Association. In 2019 they expanded the sale of their products to local craft fairs and commission based sales in a small crafts store in Huaraz generating $4,300 US in income of which $4,150.00 went directly to the women producers and $415 went towards covering the operating costs of the Center.

EARLY EDUCATION PROGRAM (Los Girasoles) 3 to 5 YEAR OLDS

The Early Childhood Education Program completed its 11th year of operations! Eight children, aged 3 to 5, received 18 hours of instruction a week based on a curriculum that teaches logic, creativity, decision making, risk taking and concepts drawn from the Montessori and Waldorf models. Two children (Mylee Pariamachi and David Oropeza) graduated this year and will be entering primary school. Their families received a scholarship of $90 US each to help cover the expenses of entering primary school. The scholarship is awarded to all graduates that attend 80% of the classes.

OTHER PROJECTS & ACTIVITIES

FAMILY GREENHOUSE / FOOD SECURITY PROJECT

In 2019, 20 more local families received family greenhouses and are now producing their own delicious and nutritional vegetables for their low income high altitude living families that typically suffer from Vitamin A (green leafy vegetable) deficiencies. All families were awarded a 12m X 5m greenhouse and the necessary gardening tools and equipment. Andean Alliance provided the materials and supervision while the families provided the labor for building their greenhouse.
All 20 families had to attend a series of 8 workshops: 4 on cooking with vegetables and 4 on how to prepare the organic fertilizer and pest control mixes. This project has been a HUGE success drawing the interest of many more local families in both the YY Association and the greenhouses. Over the past 3 years we have constructed family greenhouses for 54 thereby families improving both their family nutrition and finances.

ROAD IMPROVEMENTS

The 3.5 km road that connects the town of Marian (and the city of Huaraz) to the Yurac Yacu community and community center is a steep dirt track road and vital link for local residents. Sadly, the municipal government continues to neglect the upgrading of this road. Improvements to the road will allow more visitors to come to the Yurac Yacu Café and community center. Andean Alliance has worked with local residents on improving the road for over 12 years and in 2019 improved 280 meters of the road by constructing concrete tracks on the steeper sections of the road to allow easier access for cars.

SPECIAL THANKS

Our achievements this year could not have happened without the continued financial support of the Sombrilla International Development Society in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada along with a number of small donations received from guests at the Lazy Dog Inn. You continue to give us hope and inspiration while providing others with opportunities to better their own lives! Thank you so very much!