



## DESEA PERU WATER AND HEALTH PROGRAM 2009 Newsletter



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### 2009 Highlights

- ◆ More than 100 biosand water filters have been constructed and installed in homes and schools in three high Andean communities.
- ◆ Biweekly medical clinics and health education have been provided in each project community and more than 500 patients have been treated in the communities for diarrheal diseases, pneumonia and other medical conditions.
- ◆ A complete family health assessment conducted to determine baseline health conditions has revealed very high rates of under-five and maternal disease and mortality.
- ◆ A community health worker network has been established and health worker training has commenced.
- ◆ Partnerships have been formed with local government agencies and clinics to help sustain the community health networks.
- ◆ Volunteers from Peru, Canada, United States, and Europe have provided invaluable assistance with a wide range of tasks, including health clinic support, filter construction and installation, teaching, mapping, and database management.
- ◆ DESEA Perú's approach entails long-term community-level involvement to improve community health and well-being. Together with the communities DESEA is exploring sustainable economic development models for implementation in 2010.

### Biosand Water Filters

Clean, potable water is a vital component of DESEA's program to improve community health. Construction of permanent biosand water filters has continued in the project communities with families participating in the washing of sand and gravel and in transportation of filters. In this way, local employment is created and families take responsibility for their own drinking water quality.

DESEA staff provide hygiene and sanitation education and ongoing monitoring of filter operation and maintenance. Through the long-term, these vital tasks will be carried out by DESEA-trained community health workers.

Biosand water filters, developed by Calgary-based *Centre for Affordable Water and Sanitation Technology*, are able to remove 100% parasites, 95-98% of bacteria, and 80-90% of viruses.

### Community Health

Throughout 2009, in partnership with Kausay Wasi Clinic, bi-weekly health clinics have been held in each of the project communities.

In September 2009, DESEA undertook a community health worker program; through a community-based selection process, six indigenous Quechua women who neither read, write nor speak Spanish have been chosen to receive training as community health workers.

The Qhalis (from a Quechua term meaning 'working for health') will receive training from DESEA in areas of first aid, hygiene and sanitation, nutrition, prenatal, postnatal and neonatal health, care of sick children, traditional and western medicines, tuberculosis, alcoholism, domestic violence, early childhood education, and social change and leadership.

This training will enable the Qhalis to help improve community health and well-being and to support community efforts to alleviate poverty.

### Supporting DESEA Perú

Financial help is urgently needed for the following items to ensure that each of the six Qhalis has the tools she needs to provide health services in her community:

- ◆ training materials (\$200)
- ◆ medical supplies (\$500)
- ◆ headlamps and batteries (\$40)
- ◆ blood pressure cuffs (\$75)
- ◆ electronic thermometers (\$80)
- ◆ electronic oximeters (\$75)
- ◆ stethoscopes (\$30)

Individuals or groups may wish to provide for all supplies for one Qhali (\$1000), to contribute an amount for an individual item, to help with biosand filter installation, education and monitoring (\$90 per filter), or to make a general donation in support of the work of DESEA Perú.

**Contributions  
of any amount are  
gratefully received.**

**Tax-deductible donations in Canada and the U.S. can be made by mail or on-line.  
Please visit [www.deseaperu.org](http://www.deseaperu.org) for complete details.**

