

IMPACT



Tradition meets tomorrow

How women in Peru are
turning ancestral knowledge
into economic independence

Plus, 65 years of impact and
stories of local leadership from
Honduras and Colombia.

September 2026

Promoting financial education and business planning in Honduras

In Oma, Honduras, the local economy is based on tourism. With a current boom in economic and social growth, local organizations identified economic resilience and a gender-focused approach as key parts for the municipality's sustainable development.

In partnership with Centro de Estudios Marinos (CEM) and Rare Fish Forever, and under the leadership of the Municipality of Omoa, Cuso designed a training and business plan development program. **Featuring seven workshops and working sessions, entrepreneurs learned about starting a business, specific aspects of planning and projecting investment, recovery period, incubation of their ventures, and creating business plans.**

The focus has been on community support and work that strengthens and diversifies the economic activities of this traditional fishing community, allowing them to improve their quality of life.



"What motivated me was my family to improve my income. My mission and vision are to be a bread distribution company. I am satisfied and empowered to be an example for other women."
– Participant Joselin Cambronero

THE CUSO EFFECT

60 entrepreneurs

(55 women and 5 men), graduated from the financial education program – the third group to do so.

5 trainers trained

to strengthen the local capacities of partner organizations, the municipality, and community leaders to replicate these trainings for others.

+15% in sales revenue for entrepreneurs who participated in the training, which gave them better control over their businesses, a greater awareness of financial management, and tools that allow them to track their investments and returns.

**Scan to watch
Joselin's story**



Transforming traditional knowledge into modern products in Peru

In a rural, agricultural community two hours from Cusco, Peru, a group of women are heading to their new lab. Wearing their traditional dress, their gloves, and masks, they walk to the back of the house. **Unlike a typical house, this one has a lab where the women transform their traditional knowledge into modern products to sell at the local market.**

Supported by Cuso's SHARE program through local partner Centro Bartolome de las Casas (CBC), a small grant was used by the women of the Chari community to purchase a stove and sterilizing machine, allowing them to make and bring their creations to the market to sell to others. Traditional plants are dried and then used to make teas, soaps, lotions, and oils.

They also make hats, scarves, gloves and bags using traditional weaving.

For these women, being able to create and sell their own products is exciting and gives them a lot of pride. Not only are they sharing their traditional knowledge outside of the community, but this work also means passing on the knowledge and skills to the next generations and keeping these traditions alive.



This is just the beginning. In the future, these women dream of being able to get their products certified and expand their business nationally, and possibly internationally.

Strengthening women's voices in decision-making in Colombia

In the municipality of Timbiquí, in Cauca, Colombia women have been the primary victims of gender-based violence, with their rights violated and their voice silenced within the community because of a machist culture.



In response to this, Cuso, in partnership with the ACUA Foundation, launched an initiative to strengthen women's leadership and participation in decision-making processes within the municipality. **Through community consultation, technical support, and advocacy, women's voices were strengthened to exercise civic oversight, participate in local governance processes, and promote the incorporation of their priorities into municipal public policies.**

For these women, this is just the start. The next steps include making sure these actions are included in future municipal development plans, that there are opportunities for participatory budget planning, and supporting actions aimed at improving women's quality of life, such as violence prevention, economic autonomy, political representation, education, and health.

"We are here today to demand respect, justice, protection and real policies, not empty promises. We want institutions that respond, that support and that take action; we want care pathways that work, that save lives, and that do not revictimize." – Mary Luz Ante Orobio.

Celebrating 65 years of Cuso International

Cuso was established in Canada in 1961.



Since its founding, Cuso has sent 15,000 skilled volunteers in more than 100 countries.



In the early years, most of Cuso's volunteers were recent university graduates, and were placed mainly in secondary school and teacher training positions.



Over the decades, this expanded to include other experienced technical and trade volunteers — agriculturalists, foresters, fisheries workers, and those skilled in small business, cooperatives, and community development, as well both education and health.



The 1970s marked the start of Cuso's emphasis on development education in Canada, as well as its involvement in the anti-apartheid movement in southern Africa. During this time, Cuso also initiated project-based work, including a large school reconstruction project in Nigeria in the wake of the Biafran War.



In the 1980s, Cuso broadened its mandate to include social justice issues and shifted its focus to tackle the root causes of poverty and inequality more directly.



Today, Cuso continues engaging on key development issues.



Sharing Skills
for Better Futures



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If you have any questions about the impact of your gift, please contact us at donorrelations@cusointernational.org

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