

IMPACT

Cuso
International

YOUR GIFTS IN ACTION
SPRING 2021



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SOUTH AMERICA:

You build cultural bridges between rural Peru and the world



Before the pandemic, the women entrepreneurs in Chacan welcomed tourists into their homes so they could experience the rural Andean way of life.

Leocadia is one such “campesina”. Thanks to donors like you, she participated in learning opportunities available through Cuso and successfully launched her own ecotourism business. When guests stayed at her home, they would join her in her daily activities, learn how to make traditional medicines from local plants, and try their hand at traditional weaving techniques.

Through her business, Leocadia had access to her own income. And ecotourism allowed her to maintain her culture and traditions. But it’s not only about what she shared with her guests.

“Before ecotourism we lived only from our land. We worked with our husbands in the fields and cooked. Now when there are travelers we also live from tourism,” says Leocadia. “They visit us from other countries, and they learn about our way of life and we learn about theirs. We talk and exchange points of view at the table. They become my family.”

Canadian volunteers provided technical assistance in the area of sustainable tourism. The women gained knowledge and skills in marketing, collecting payments and financial management, and constructing tours that focus on topics like traditional gastronomy and weaving.



Leocadia at her home.

Now, due to COVID-19, Leocadia’s tourism services have been put on hold, but that hasn’t stopped her. Leocadia is now receiving training from Cuso on sanitation and safe drinking water practices, so when tourists are ready to come back, they’ll be greeted by even safer conditions than before the pandemic.

Donors like you are making that happen.

SOUTHEAST ASIA:

You are sowing seeds of opportunity in the face of COVID-19



A changing climate can mean the difference between food on the table or going hungry.

In Laos, small scale farmers—often women—are facing drought and fluctuations in temperature that have been brought by climate change. Add in the effects of the pandemic, and the results have been devastating.

Because of the virus, “people are scared to go out,” says Noy, a young mother and farmer in the village of Hoi. “Today, we can’t sell at all.”

Without a market for their produce, Noy and her fellow farmers are now having trouble making money and feeding their families.

With the support of donors like you, Cuso was able to continue to share climate-smart farming techniques with rural women

CENTRAL AFRICA: You are flattening the curve in Cameroon



Like in many other parts of Africa, the COVID-19 pandemic has had a devastating impact on vulnerable people—particularly women—in remote areas. Cameroon is no different.

With little access to formal health care, medical equipment or proper sanitation, it's difficult to control the virus. Added to that is the fact that women are traditionally less exposed to information. And, because they are the ones who spend hours each day outside the house in search of food and water, they're at high risk of contracting the virus.

To get ahead of this risk, and thanks to the incredible support of donors like you, Cuso International launched a rapid response project targeting areas where the need is greatest while employing women entrepreneurs in the fight.

Cuso is distributing hygiene and protection kits to health workers and centres, families and schools. Four women's empowerment centres are directly involved, raising awareness in local languages through door-to-door visits and community prevention activities.

Women are also being hired in the communities and trained to manufacture the protection kits, allowing distribution to continue throughout the project and after its completion.

Very often in charge of their households from a health point of view, these women will be able to disseminate all their knowledge about COVID-19 within their households and thus be agents for spreading information in their localities.



A woman demonstrates proper mask-wearing at a school in her community.

farmers. Their understanding of these new techniques as well as the introduction of drought-resistant crops will be critical to their ability to survive through the pandemic and have a more stable food supply when it is over.

Rice is one of the main crops in rural Laos, but the type of rice that's been grown in the past cannot survive the new reality of drought or flooding. That's why drought and flood-resistant types of rice have been introduced.

The growing period for the new types of rice is more than a month shorter than the traditional type, meaning that two crops can be harvested each year instead of one. Not only that, but the resistant seeds can produce double the harvest.

This means that families will have a more reliable and sustainable food source regardless of the weather.



Small scale farmers in Laos have new hope for the future.

HORN OF AFRICA: You're educating girls in Ethiopia



In Ethiopia, the proportion of girls to boys in school gets lower and lower as children move through school and into higher education. The main reason that they leave is to help their mothers run the home. Thanks to your support, that will soon change.

Through a brand-new initiative, girls' education is getting a big boost. Cuso is addressing the barriers to girls' access to education—such as their need to help with domestic chores.

And the project doesn't just benefit the girls. It also benefits their families, community members, boys in their classes, their teachers and the school administration. The whole idea is centered on the sense of community and creating a support system for them to succeed.

The project enhances academic, social and soft skills for girls. They receive academic resources, training and tutorials, and a financial stipend to allow them to focus on schoolwork. At the same time, we're also strengthening the capacity of teachers and schools to deliver quality and gender-sensitive education.

When we focus on the education of young children, especially girls, they grow up having the drive and the self-assurance to stand up for themselves and each other. That will have a big impact on the region, the country and the world.

Your Impact by the Numbers

Thanks to your support, Cuso International has worked with over **15,000 volunteers** in more than **100 countries**, for 60 years, to create opportunity, security and dignity for people in need—especially women and girls.

In the last year alone, you have helped:



16,498 staff, partners, volunteers and donors work together to make a difference.



66% of our beneficiaries, who are women and children. Thanks to you, we are able to help the most vulnerable members of society.



20 countries benefit from Cuso International programs.

We'd love to hear from you!



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