



Early Education Centre



1-PRESENTATION OF THE CIVIL ASSOCIATION YACHAY WASI.

1.1 Presentation and Antecedents

YACHAY WASI is a Quechua expression (the ancient language of the Incas), which means “house of learning”. This is the name of this non-profit association, which hopes to open doors to culture and education, by inspiring an interest in reading, culture, sport, art and knowledge.

We are interested in forming children who are reflective, creative, critical, self-confident, motivated and integrated, by transmitting to them the right values and providing them with the necessary tools to confront the modern world.

Since the year 2007, the people and institutions involved in this project have participated in various undertakings related to education, throughout Peru.

In the year 2008, inspired by a communal idea, the association “Yachay Wasi” was born, with the incentive to work in the community of Ollantaytambo providing educative services which would complement the regular education given at schools.

In September 2009, thanks to the joint efforts and collaboration of friends, the “Casa Cultural-Biblioteca Yachay-Wasi” (*Cultural Centre and Library Yachay-Wasi*) was created. Here children came in the afternoons to do their homework and to participate in different workshops, as well as to attend English classes. In May 2012, due to the success of the project, the local government, which had been loaning the building to Yachay Wasi, decided to take over running the establishment itself, allowing us to focus on our second project, an Early Education Centre.

In March 2011 Yachay-Wasi opened an Early Education Centre, providing high quality education for children from 1 to 5 years of age. It is an institution based on intercultural inclusion, working with children from all social class and different abilities. The institution has an ecological vision, where we respect and protect the environment; it offers spaces dedicated to art, recycling, theatre, music, sport and bodily expression and other activities which contribute to intellectual, physical and emotional development. The education is personalised, based on the theory of multiple intelligences, identifying and making the most of the talents of each boy or girl. Fundamentally, it is a space where children enjoy themselves as they learn, and where they receive affection and feel free and happy.

1.2. Team.

The team of the Association includes:

Guillermina Sánchez, President of the association. She is a teacher who has worked in numerous public and private educational establishments in Argentina and Peru since 1999. She works as coordinator of the projects of an NGO and as an English and Spanish teacher. In 2007 she created a small nursery in Ollantaytambo for children of 1 to 3 years of age, which functioned for 3 years. Since 2011 she has been the director and promotor of the Early Education Centre Yachay Wasi.

Federica Frenda, Secretary and Treasurer of the association. She has a degree in Economics and worked for ten years as a financial advisor to small and medium-size companies in Italy. She has participated in the programme Tierra de Niños in Manco Inca school in Ollantaytambo since 2008 and was in charge of the library project of Yachay Wasi from September 2009 til June 2012.

Kennedy Leavens, is vice-president of the association and advisor. She graduated from the International Service School of Georgetown University, where she studied Latin-American and International Development. She is the president of the NGO Awamaki, which works with us via their volunteering programme.

Louise Norton, is a partner in the Association. She was director of a project that worked with the Inka trail porters in Cusco and co-founded Leap Local, an association dedicated to promoting the work of local guides in different parts of the world. She currently works with the Alma Foundation for Children's Education, coordinating and monitoring educational projects around the Sacred Valley and in the city of Cusco.

José Manuel Rabanal Cabrerizo, is a partner of the association. He graduated in Marketing and Leisure and worked as a leisure coordinator in Spain for 10 years and as a marketing advisor for various different Peruvian companies. In 2011 he worked as a teacher of Ecology and Recycling at the Early Education Centre.

Aima Molinari Gonzalez is a partner of the association. She has a degree in Hotel Administration and works with the ecological educational programme Tierra de Niños. She has developed this programme at the school Manco Inca in Ollantaytambo since 2007. In 2011 she started to develop the programme Tierra de Niños at our Early Education Centre.

Luciano Schiavo, is a partner of the association. He is a librarian with many years experience in Italy. He has supported with fundraising since the association started with funds for the implementation of the Cultural Centre and Library.

1.3. Vision, Mission and Values.

MISSION

Complement and contribute in the education of children and adolescents in the District of Ollantaytambo, offering different alternatives and educative and cultural activities. We want to educate people reflective, creative and critical, confident, motivated, transmitting good values and providing them with tools that help them to cope in the modern world.

VISION

Yachay Wasi broadens the scope of action, develops new and varied projects that serve as a model to other institutions or communities, contributing to become better people and better societies. Develop partnerships with various public and private institutions, ensuring the success of their programs.

VALUES:

Yachay-Wasi holds the following values:

RESPECT for the dignity of individuals, for differences and for the environment.

RESPONSABILITY and COMMITMENT towards learning.

SOLIDARITY amongst members of the institution, emphasising mutual help and reciprocity, and contributing to the society in general.

HONESTY, always looking for the truth.

JUSTICE.

EQUALITY, providing equal opportunities to everyone including children of varying learning abilities.

SELF-ESTEEM, creating confidence in the children.

PEACE, creating a nice ambience, teaching children to resolve their conflicts and to always look for peace and meditation and not resort to violence.

LOVE, encouraging affection among students, with teachers and with family, to ensure the positive development of their emotional intelligence.

2. PRESENTATION OF THE PROJECT

2.1. Summary and Presentation of the Project

Project name: "Yachay Wasi Early Education Learning Centre"

This project aims to enhance, expand and improve the Yachay Wasi Early Education Centre operating since March 2011 in the District of Ollantaytambo. The first year a total of 32 children from 1 to 5 years received attention. This attention was expanded in 2012 to 45 girls and boys.

Our mission is to be an Early Education Centre of high educational quality, which assures the adequate conditions for an integral education, which is appropriate, open, fair, inclusive and flexible; and which counts on a team of very dedicated people, who guarantee the wellbeing of every single child. We think it is fundamental to form reflective, critical, creative children who are confident in themselves and their potential, providing them with the necessary tools to cope in the modern world.

2.2. Team of the Early Education Centre.

Guillermina Sánchez, Teacher, Director of the Centre.

Dionisia Gamarra Villanueva, Teacher, with a degree in Early Education, and Quechua teacher.

Ana Pi Casacuberta, psychologist, specialist in family therapy.

Joana Vitoria Martins, Administrator, Art-therapy teacher.

Maribel Medina Serra, teacher.

Vilma Caviedes Ayala, education assistant.

Neyda Ortiz, teacher, Promoter of PRONOEI Alameda.

3. CONTEXT AND JUSTIFICATION

3.1 Context

This project takes place in the district of Ollantaytambo, which is located in the North-eastern part of the province of Urubamba, in the department of Cusco, Peru. The capital of this district is the village itself of Ollantaytambo.

It covers a total of 640.25 Km², making up 44% of the whole province.

Ollantaytambo is part of the Sacred Valley of the Incas, and considers itself to be an urban Inca settlement and one of the most valued patrimonial heritage sites, containing abundant examples of impressive Inca and Pre-Inca architecture.

The Inca village of Ollantaytambo is one of the oldest villages in all of South America that continues to be inhabited today, giving it its reputation as a "Living Inca Village". It is located 80km North-East of Cusco and 40km from Machu Picchu, by train. Located in the district of Ollantaytambo, province of Urubamba, and department of Cusco, Peru.

The district of Ollantaytambo has a population of 9,826 people according to the last census carried out in 2007. 52 % are male and 48 % female. 20.15 % live in the urban areas and 79.85 % live in rural areas.

Ollantaytambo's location means it borders with the district of Machu Picchu – a major tourist attraction and one of the wonders of the world – and is one of the main connecting stations for trains going to the Inca citadel of Machu Picchu, as well as being part of the popular tourist circuit: Cusco – Pisac – Calca – Urubamba – Ollantaytambo – Chinchero – Cusco.

As a result of its location and importance Ollantaytambo has been an area of high economic development in the last few years, due mainly, to tourism. However, cultural, educational, civic and environmental development has not grown at the same speed.



3.2 Justification

In Peruvian society children continue to be the most vulnerable and unprotected citizens.

Of the 3.8 million people that live in extreme poverty in this country, 2.1 million are children. Of the 10.2 million people aged under 18, more than 6.5 million live below the poverty line.

Despite the growing economy in Ollantaytambo, there continues to be socioeconomic inequality and lack of resources in the education sector.

The main problems in the area are:

- Absenteeism from school.
- Low levels of education.
- Lack of recreational/cultural spaces.
- Lack of parental interest and participation in the overseeing of their children's education.
- Unstable family structures.
- Alcoholism.
- Gender and child abuse.
- Malnutrition.
- Child labour.

The main problems children encounter in the education sector are:

- Lack of motivation.
- Learning difficulties.
- Lack of concentration and comprehension.
- Lack of social skills.
- Problems of self-esteem and self-confidence.
- Lack of creativity.
- Insecurity.
- Unhappiness.

In the city of Ollantaytambo many deficiencies have been identified in the area of education. The low quality of education is caused mainly by the lack of motivation of the teachers and students, little interest and dedication from parents, violence in schools (amongst teachers and the students themselves), lack of adequate school facilities, modern teaching methods and teaching resources.

Through helping children, as well as teenagers, with their homework in the Casa Cultural-Biblioteca Yachay Wasi, we have become aware of the low standard of education that schools offer and the lack of creativity, the insecurity, the lack of comprehension, the low self-esteem, the short attention spans and lack of motivation encountered in many children and teenagers.

Another of the motives that pushed us to open this Early Education Centre is that the district has no places for children under 4 years of age to be looked after. No institution, either public or private exists that takes care of children aged between the ages of 1 and 3. As a result mothers are unable to work, and if they do, they have to carry their children

on their backs, or leave them with their siblings or other family members who have neither the stimulation nor attention necessary.

For these reasons we have developed this project, which we know entails a lot of work and dedication, but which ultimately will be very satisfying and more than anything a great alternative and opportunity for the development of the children in this area.

4. DEVELOPMENT OF THE PROJECT

4.1 General objective:

Provide an educational service of a high standard, which concentrates on the individual, and which is available to all the children in the district of Ollantaytambo and its adjacent communities.

Stimulate these children so that their development is optimal, and provide them with a solid foundation for their school life.

4.2 Results:

- To construct a building, which accords with the educational institute, and provides spaces for workshops, green areas, a library and a room for the smaller children, which complies with all security, measures and offer all the necessary comforts.
- To form integrated, reflective and creative individuals, capable of expressing themselves and standing up for their ideas and who are able to express themselves before others, and work constantly on their self-esteem so that they act in a secure and confident manner.
- To provide the equal opportunities to all the children who live in and around the district of Ollantaytambo.
- To teach children values such as respect, autonomy, solidarity, collaboration, peace, friendship, truth, equality and justice.
- To provide the children with the necessary tools to confront the modern world.
- To arouse, in the children, an interest in learning, in a way that is enjoyable: using games as a means of learning.
- To base the teaching on the a multi-disciplinary method, which extracts its content from different disciplines to assure a well rounded education, and in turn the children will have the chance to develop their own individual talents and abilities.
- To salvage and maintain the cultural identity of the area, incorporating the teaching of Quechua and emphasising an appreciation for the Inca heritage.
- Stimulate the development of children from 1 to 5 years, respecting the times of each individual.
- Have qualified teachers, offering a good economic remuneration and thus ensure their commitment and dedication
- Train constantly to staff in different areas, ensuring an optimal performance in their functions.

4.3 Beneficiaries.

During the first two years of operation the Early Education Center benefited directly about 70 boys and girls together with their families, which could work and contribute economically to their homes.

Indirectly benefit reaches the public educational institutions of Ollantaytambo and children attending them, making them part of educational trainings and activities organized by Yachay Wasi.

We particularly support the PRONOEI "La Alameda", which is a basic education program for children from 3 to 5 years old, promoted by the Ministry of education and that depends on the Regional Government. This program used to function in a room provided by the community without some basic facilities, such as toilets, electricity, natural light or an open area. In 2012 we have loaned a space within our building to the PRONOEI, sharing all the common areas and giving them the opportunity to participate in special classes such as theatre, music, dance, quechua, and English organized by Yachay Wasi. We also support economically to the promoter of the PRONOEI, who has due to extend their working hours.

4.4 Impact in the community

For the first time in Ollantaytambo exists an Education Center for children under the age of 4, where are well looked after, fed and stimulated.

The parents of these children have free time to work or engage in other activities, while their children attend the Center, thus they can improve the family economy.

The children of Ollantaytambo have access to a new educational alternative. They receive quality education, through modern methodologies of teaching and innovative teaching resources.

They have a new and modern infrastructure appropriate to their needs, where children are stimulated and motivated. The Association Yachay Wasi generates new alliances between different public and private organizations and individuals linked to education.

Yachay Wasi creates a space for Exchange and volunteering, with national and foreign experts, where perform trainings for teachers of this educational institution and public institutions existing in the area.

The center encourages different non-profit projects that contribute to the well-being of the inhabitants of the District of Ollantaytambo. (specially ecological projects)

The families in the community are experiencing a new way of participation in the education of their children fostered from the educational center. We organize meetings, lectures and free courses for parents, which covers topics of interest to families.

5. ACTIVITIES

5.1 Principal activities

The activities involved in this project are divided into two parts:

One related to the construction of the building;

The other related to the development of teaching methods and activities from March 2011 onwards.

5.2 Activities in detail

- Construction of buildings.
- Elaboration of the Situational diagnosis.
- Implementation of the classrooms and spaces of the institution.
- Educational planning.
- Needs assessment and management of official aid.
- Early stimulation for children 1 to 3 years.
- Basic education program in Spanish for children 3 to 5 years through the High Scope Curriculum.
- Workshops of art, corporal expression, physical education, music, environment, cooking.
- Teaching English and Quechua languages.
- Use of technologies in teaching and learning systems.
- Implementation of methodologies based on the theory of multiple intelligences to the teaching of curricular content.
- Incorporation of the "Tierra de Niños" program to work primarily the area of environmental and ecological values, as well as integrating the general philosophy in all teaching areas.
- of ecology through good values, and integrating their philosophy elsewhere in the areas of teaching.
- Creation of programs for the integration of children of varying learning abilities.
- Workshops in cultural identity and the recovery of customs and traditions.
- Permanent teaching skills.
- Cultural exchanges with teachers, groups of children and volunteers from Peru and other countries.
- School of parents. (workshops and talks with parents).
- Establishment of a psychological clinic to serve families and children who need it.
- Inclusion of a nutrition program offering lunch for the children.

6. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROJECT

Yachay Wasi is a private Early Education Center recognized by the National Department of Education of Peru.

In 2011 provides attendance in cycles I and II of the initial level (boys and girls aged 1 to 5), divided into two classrooms: one for children 1 to 3 years and the other for children of 4 and 5 years.

In the year 2012 increases the amount of children to 45, divided into 4 classrooms.

In the year 2013 is intended to begin a school lunch and breakfast program.

Education is personalized as there is a maximum of 15 children per classroom with a teacher tutor and an Assistant, in the case of the littlest children.

In addition to the compulsory curriculum, established by the Ministry of education of Peru, we offer weekly classes of body expression, Quechua, English, music, physical education, pottery and ecology - Garden (Tierra de niños program www.mundodeania.org).



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