



Q'ENTE TEXTILE REVITALIZATION SOCIETY

*Annual Impact Assessment Report
on the Sustainability of Weaving Co-operatives in the Sacred Valley*

*December 2010
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REPORT INTENTIONS:

This report aims to complete a comprehensive impact assessment of Q'ente's interactions with each of the co-operatives that they work with. Through systematic and standard methods of monitoring the influence that Q'ente has on the members of the weaving associations and the communities in which they live, information can be provided that will help Q'ente volunteers to better understand the organization's strengths and weaknesses. Q'ente's impact on these communities will be assessed by examining the goals of each community and their expectations for Q'ente's support, as well as the levels of support that Q'ente is actually able to provide. This report begins by providing background information on the organization, a detailed outline of ways to measure its impact, and methodology for collecting information. It also discusses certain trends among the communities, and includes general information about the ways in which Q'ente influences the weaving co-operatives. A detailed description of the achievements of each weaving co-operative and overall relationships with Q'ente follows. Finally, the report will conclude by providing constructive criticism for Q'ente, and praise for the goals it has successfully achieved.

WHAT IS Q'ENTE?

The Q'ente Textile Revitalization Society (Q'ente) is a not-for-profit society that began working with Peruvian weaving co-operatives in 2006. Q'ente supports nine weaving co-operatives within the Sacred Valley region by providing an outlet to sell their textiles in Canada, and by generating funds for individuals and community projects alike. The aim of the project is to foster sustainability within the Sacred Valley by supporting the textile tradition and raising awareness of its cultural, historical and economic significance. Q'ente operates under the principles of fair trade, and supports community collaboration through co-operatives. Q'ente's goals are outlined in the next section.



Q'ente volunteers visiting Bombon March 2010

Q'ENTE GOALS

- » To help revitalize the Quechua textile tradition, due to its artistic, cultural, and historical value
- » To renew respect and pride for the Quechua culture, language, and lifestyle
- » To act as a networking platform for textile and cultural revitalization projects in the Peruvian Andes
- » To encourage the transmission of traditional knowledge and reconnection of generations in Quechua communities
- » To help stabilize the economy in participating communities, and bridge the gap in the commodity chain between producer and consumer
- » To foster international awareness of and compassion for third-world issues, international solidarity, and the value of indigenous traditions

BREAK DOWN OF Q'ENTE FUNDS

Q'ente breaks down the sale price of weavings in Canada into four parts. The first quarter of the funds are given directly to the weaver at the time of purchase. The second quarter of the funds go to the weaving co-operative to which the weaver belongs at the end of the selling season. This portion of the funds is to be used towards a specific community revitalization project. The third quarter goes towards supporting the Sacred Valley Youth Fund, which provides opportunities for post-secondary education to community leaders. The fourth quarter goes back into Q'ente, providing money to purchase weavings and cover operational costs. The main focus of this report will be on the second quarter of the funds and how effectively it is used in each community to create positive change.



Breakdown of Q'ente Funds

RESPONSIBILITIES

When Q'ente begins working with a weaving co-operative in Peru, they become responsible to that community in a number of ways. Q'ente makes an agreement with the weaving co-operative to support them as best they can, by selling that co-operative's weavings in Canada. Q'ente also agrees to pay the weaver for their weavings directly, rather than on a consignment basis. Q'ente agrees to sell the products to the best of their ability and return one quarter of the funds to be put towards a community project. It is also implicit in the agreement that Q'ente will follow up with each co-operative on a regular basis, and maintain ongoing communication. It is important that Q'ente only attempts to support a certain number of co-operatives, so that each of these commitments can be respected, and adequate assistance can be provided to them. It is also Q'ente's responsibility to ensure that funds set aside for community revitalization projects be put towards initiatives that are well-defined and effective. Q'ente can help to develop and facilitate plans for these projects.

As an international NGO, Q'ente must also maintain a level of responsibility to their supporters and donors. To show accountability for their actions and intentions, it is important to have public education and transparency within the operation of organization. Accountability is both external, in terms of an obligation to meet prescribed standards, and internal, in terms of responsibility to follow the organization's goals. One way that Q'ente can establish accountability to both the co-operatives they work with and their public supporters is to publish an annual impact assessment report. This report will be useful in helping to make internal improvements, as well in providing clear and transparent information for external supporters.



MEASURES OF IMPACT: *measurable goals*

In order to evaluate Q'ente's impact on the co-operatives that they work with, goals must be identified that are specific enough to be measurable. Q'ente current goals (as outlined) demonstrate the broad objectives which Q'ente strives to complete as an organization. In order to measure success on an annual basis, however, Q'ente must develop more concrete goals and specific ways in which to accomplish them. One of the most important aspects of achieving a goal is to measure its progress regularly.

Because Q'ente is a grassroots organization that works with local and rural communities, they must take a different approach to documenting their progress towards their goals than large scale NGOs, which use defined community metrics such as literacy, gross domestic product (GDP) and level of education within the regions that they work with to measure the changes in social and economic status. There is not enough concrete information available about the small communities that Q'ente works with to develop metrics such as these. Therefore, Q'ente must evaluate co-operative progress through relative and qualitative descriptions.

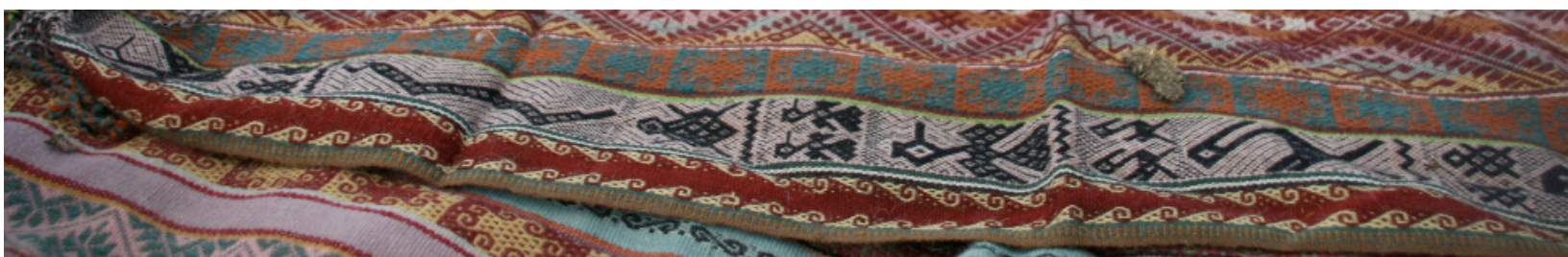
One of the key elements of Q'ente is that they wish to support the co-operatives they work with in a way that inspires autonomy, independence and creativity within the members of their weaving associations. For this reason, each co-operative develops unique goals for their community and unique expectations of Q'ente. One of Q'ente's main objectives, which is not included in their official goals, is to help these co-operatives to complete their respective goals with regards to association and community development. The following objectives may be used as metrics to measure the effectiveness of Q'ente's support in helping the co-operatives to achieve these goals. Q'ente must find a balance between monitoring the weavers and guiding them in order to achieve their goals.

Figure 2.0 Measurable Goals and Stages of Completion

<i>Goals</i>	<i>Stages of Completion</i>
Co-operative goal setting	Goals defined, plans developed, project underway, project complete
Communication	Infrequent, frequent, personal, distant, documented
Relationship status	Contact established, goals established, maintained contact, trust developed

METHODOLOGY

The information for this study was collected through In Situ interviews with members of each co-operative in the Sacred Valley during April, 2010. Updates from Q'ente volunteers and key members of the organization, such as Ashli Akins (president) and Sarah Confer (vice-president) were also included in the report. The interviews were primarily conducted with weaving association presidents, but include input from community weavers. The main focus of the interviews was on monitoring the goals and plans for the past, current and future community projects of each co-operative. Questions also delved into the weavers' relationship with Q'ente, and Q'ente's strengths and weaknesses. The interviews were conducted in Spanish, and always included at least one community member who could speak Spanish. This community member was often translating for other weavers, who spoke little Spanish but were fluent in their traditional Quechua language. Due to the translation, some details or nuances may have been lost during the interview. Q'ente volunteers Sarah Confer, Jose Luis, Thalia Christou and Allie Dickhout were present during the interviews.



The communities and associated weaving associations that Q'ente currently works with are:

- » Amaru - *Asociacion de Tejedores Tradicionales Laraypas Indigenas de Amaru*
- » Q'enqo - *Asociacion Pally Loraypo*
- » Huaran - *Munayurpi de Huaran*
- » Calca - *K'anchay Wasi*
- » Cancha Cancha- *Acosiación Yllaric Chaska*
- » Parobamba- *Awaq Warmis*
- » Pitukiska- *Asociacion Artesanal Mayuchaska Pitukiska*
- » Bombon- *Tikay Pallay*

Other textile revitalization projects that were interviewed include former Q'ente partners:

- » Casa Ecologica
- » CTTC (Centre for Traditional Textiles of Cusco)
- » Awamaki

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

There was a wide range of comments made during the interviews regarding progress on community projects, relationships with Q'ente, community well-being, and suggestions for Q'ente. Amidst the diverse answers, there were also some general observations of trends within the weaving associations.

There was a wide range of social and economic well-being among the communities that the weaving associations belonged to, and significant differences in their levels of organization. Some communities, such as Amaru, appeared to have strong structure and organization in their weaving association, with a set of distinct and ambitious goals. It became obvious that other communities, such as Q'enqo, are living in extreme poverty, and their current goals are limited to immediate financial security. Many members of the weaving associations expressed a feeling that there was a general disintegration of values within the community, such as respect for tradition, family, and the environment.

Many weaving associations had not defined distinct goals or plans for community projects, while others had created detailed outlines. The groups with developed plans need support from Q'ente to make timelines and define logistics. The groups without plans need support for brainstorming and goal development. There was general feedback that communities would like more support and guidance in the planning and implementation of the projects.

There is a discrepancy between those who are benefiting from the revitalization projects in their communities. Some co-operatives are using the communal funds for projects that benefit the entire community, whereas others are using the funds for projects that benefit only weavers in the association. Several communities held the common goal of establishing a weaving centre as a basic need for the weavers, before beginning other community projects.

In some communities, almost everyone is involved in the weaving association, so that co-operative members make up the majority of the community. In other communities, only a select few participate in the weaving associations. For example, there are very high participation rates in the three communities within the Mapacho River Valley (Parobamba, Bombon and Pitukiska). In larger communities like Calca and Huaran, however, the weavers make up only a small portion of the population.

A major concern expressed by many weaving groups was that they would like more regular and frequent communication with Q'ente representatives. Several co-operatives also stated that they would like a greater focus to be placed on helping them network with more contacts in Peru, to broaden the market for their textiles. Almost all of the weaving associations had large quantities of weavings that they were hoping to sell to Q'ente or other outlets. For most communities, Q'ente was their only source for selling textiles.

Co-operatives who had more than one year of experience working with Q'ente all seemed happy with their relationships to the organization, and the outcomes of the project. They seemed to feel respected by Q'ente because they feel that the organization does not try to force values or material goods upon them, helping them to develop and achieve their own goals instead. Members of weaving associations that had just established formal relationships with Q'ente in the last year all seemed excited about the opportunities that Q'ente would provide them with, and were eager to make plans for the future.



Traditional backstrap loom in the Mapacho Valley

COMMUNITY SPECIFIC IMPACTS

Amaru

Asociacion de Tejedores Tradicionales Laraypas Indigenas de Amaru

Partners since: *2007*

Co-operative Goal Setting: *Project Complete 2009, Plans Developed 2010*

Communication: *Frequent, Personal, Distant, Documented*

Relationship Status: *Maintained Contact*



Members of the Asociacion de Tejedores Tradicionales Laraypas Indigenas de Amaru

Community Revitalization Project

2008: *Completed.*

Two Floor looms were purchased with the money received from Q'ente (\$700). The community is using the looms to weave large blankets and wall hangings, in order to raise additional funds for their programs.

2009: *In Progress.*

The funds from 2009 were used to build 18 bathrooms for the weavers in the association. Each washroom has a composting toilet. There is a urine-collecting tube that gathers the water to use for dyeing, and for watering plants. There is also a towel rack and bowl of water with which to wash your hands. Local materials were used to construct the washrooms. These washrooms are in various stages of completion. The community will also add solar-heated showers by using plastic rainwater bins on the roofs.

Cost: Each washroom costs about 400s (Peruvian Soles)



Finished compostable toilet in Amaru 2010

2010: *Plans developed.*

The co-operative plans to use next year's funds to improve the kitchens of families involved in the weaving association. This will include creating better fireplaces that will not waste wood, and will eliminate smoke pollution. They also intend to install cupboards to store all of the dishes, and make indoor sinks with running water. The smoke leaving the chimney would heat the water for the kitchen. There would also be an area for ecological cold storage. This project is important to the community because it would help to improve the health and hygiene of its members. They have identified a specialist who will help them design the kitchens.

Cost: The project will cost 600 s/kitchen. There will be 18 kitchens in total. They will also need an extra 2000 s to hire the specialist.

Relationship with Q'ente:

The Asociacion de Tejedores Tradicionales Laraypas Indigenas de Amaru has many well thought out and ambitious goals for projects in the future. They seem to be well networked, and are working with several other organizations including Programa Nacional Manejo de Cuencas y Conservacion de Suelos (to create a native plant garden) and University of Alas Peruanas (to establish a dye collection), as well as Casa Ecologica. The president, Gregorio, strongly expressed the importance of health to the community saying “without health you can not achieve anything else” (Gregorio Solatero Tacuri, 2010). For this reason, health is the main focus of their community revitalization projects. Since working with Q'ente, Amaru has experienced a change in pride and women's social stigma, because they no longer depend on their husbands for income. “The women have dignity now because they don't depend on their husbands. They have pride in making products and receiving income for them” (Gregorio Solatero Tacuri, 2010).

The Asociacion de Tejedores Tradicionales Laraypas Indigenas de Amaru sees many positive aspects of their work with Q'ente, including the respect they show for cultural traditions, the economic solidarity they offer, the prospect of contributing to children's education, their use of fair trade and respect for mother earth, their increased business, and respect for indigenous knowledge and technology. They suggested that Q'ente could improve by collaborating more with other organizations who might help to fund projects or provide a wider market for Amaru weavers.

Communication:

The Asociacion de Tejedores Tradicionales Laraypas Indigenas de Amaru encourages Q'ente to visit the project at any time. The internet and telephone are also fine ways to communicate with them. Weekends are best, because that is when Gregorio goes to Písaq to check his email. Contact: Gregorio Sotalero Tacuri; (email) laraypa1@hotmail.com; (cell) 984751766 (*doesn't always work)



Weaving on a backstrap loom in Amaru

Q'enqo

Asociacion Pally Loraypo

Partners since: *2009*

Co-operative Goal Setting: *Goals defined*

Communication: *Bi-annually, personal, distant*

Relationship Status: *Goals Established*



Women of Q'enqo

Community Revitalization Project

2009: Goals Defined

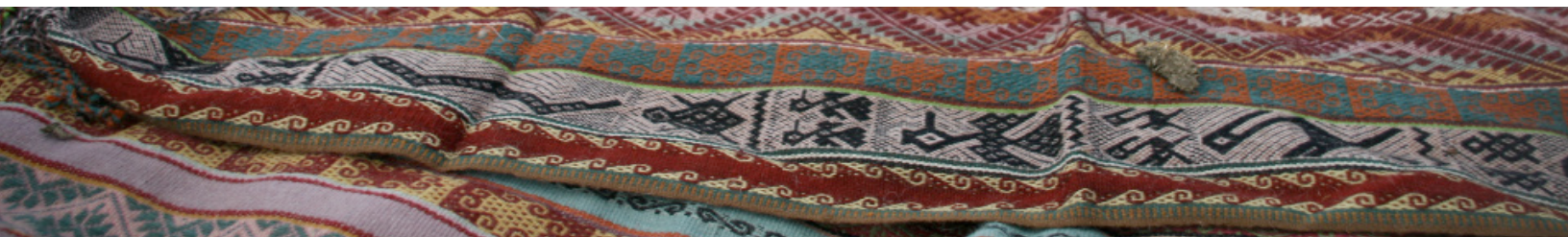
The Asociacion Pally Loraypo did not receive any significant funds from 2009 because only a few sample purchases have been made from this community. They have the pressing short term goal of supporting and rebuilding the homes of 10 families who lost property in the recent flood of March 2010. The estimated cost to repair these homes is about 2000s/home. The flood devastated the community. Not only did it cause damage to more than ten homes, it also destroyed the entirety of the year's potato harvest. Potatoes are Q'enqo's only agricultural export, and constitute the main source of income and trade for the community. Q'enqo therefore needs assistance with food security, as all of their crops were ruined by disease from the floods.

Goals for future projects:

Individuals in Q'enqo are facing extreme poverty, and are in need of immediate and constant support in order to begin to become sustainable. The weaving members wish to revive their traditional culture. The president of the association commented that "7-8 years ago everyone wore traditional clothing and now no one does" (Bacelio Quispe Chaucca, 2010). They are restricted in their agricultural opportunities and access to markets by their high elevation. Increasing food security in this community is very important to community members. Long-term goals include expanding their resource base by building greenhouses for each family, as well as purchasing some land further down in the valley so that they can grow a variety of crops. They also wish to purchase more alpacas to have greater quantities and higher qualities of wool. Wool can only be harvested from llamas once every two years, whereas alpacas can be sheared twice a year.

Another way in which the association hopes to expand their potential for income is by improving tourism in the region by leading tours. They would take tourists on a circuit trek to Lamay. Tourists could stay in the homes of families; currently they have room for about 20 people to stay in the community. They would display weavings, go on tours of plants, agricultural practices and ruins, and hold a dying workshop. For each month they have a distinct festival/activity planned.

Bacelio, Asociacion Pally Loraypo's president, expressed that the members of the community feel they have lost many aspects of their traditional culture, including their relationship with Pachamama (Mother Earth) and their traditional weaving practices. They are currently attempting to revitalize the textile tradition by learning patterns from a few elders in the community. They have currently learned about 30 designs.





Spinning wool in Q'enqo

Relationship with Q'ente:

Asociacion Pally Loraypo chose to work with Q'ente because it provides an opportunity for them to sell their weavings, and to raise income for the community. The association currently has no other contacts or markets. Because this co-operative just started working with Q'ente, it was too soon for them to comment on Q'ente's strengths and weaknesses. They seemed to have little trust in Q'ente because of their lack of experience with the organization. Through maintained communication and support, Q'ente believes they can slowly gain their trust and commitment.

Communication:

The best way to stay in touch with Q'enqo is through the association president, Bacelio Quispe Chauca.
Contact: bacelio12@hotmail.com

Huaran

Munayurpi de Huaran

Meaning “Beautiful Dove”

Partners since: 2009

Co-operative Goal Setting: *Goals defined 2010*

Communication: *Frequent, Personal, Distant, Documented*

Relationship Status: *Goals Established*



Weavers of Munayurpi de Huaran

Community Revitalization Project

2010: Goals Defined

Munayurpi de Huaran will not be receiving much money this year, as only a few samples were purchased from them last year. Plans for their future community projects are mainly focused on improving the women's lifestyle. This community would like to develop a project to support young mothers. There are many young mothers in Huaran with 4-5 children, who can not afford school supplies for their kids. This project would help to supply these mothers with uniforms, backpacks, shoes, notebooks, pencils, and other essential supplies. Next, they would like to build a daycare for young children so that the mothers can work. There is one daycare in town already, but most people can not afford to pay the fees.

Munayurpi de Huaran also expressed the goal of improving their sales by acquiring their own location on the main road, where people can see them weaving in a covered place and they can sell their textiles. They wish to continue to network with other contacts and to find a stable market in which to sell their products. A house belonging to one of the key members in their weaving association, Andres, was completely destroyed by the flooding in March. They suggested using community funds to help rebuild Andres' house.

Relationship with Q'ente:

Munayurpi de Huaran's relationship with Q'ente is just beginning. They seem excited about the prospect of continuing to revitalize the traditional weaving culture in Huaran with help from Q'ente. In the past five years, weaving has begun to resurface in the community. Women from isolated communities in the mountains have been teaching them how to weave. With Q'ente, they can put these weaving skills towards work and income.

This weaving co-operative also maintains relationships with several other organizations. They currently work with the Living Hearts association, based out of Ollantaytambo through Sonia. Through Sonia they have also sold some textiles to a woman named Lizet, for an exhibition in Holland. They used to work with an organization called Corridor Cusco-Puno, approximately one year ago. This organization helped to facilitate sales through the radio by broadcasting where and when textiles were being sold. Through this organization they were able to travel, and meet other groups of weavers. They therefore gained more motivation and inspiration through this project. Munayurpi de Huaran also sells their textiles at fairs in Calca. These fairs take place in August and in June.

Communication:

Staying in regular communication with Q'ente is important to the weaving association. They expressed disappointment that some Q'ente representatives did not visit when they agreed they would. When these representatives did visit (a couple of weeks later), they felt more supported. Commitment and punctuality is very important to this association. They expect at least one annual visit from Q'ente.

The best way to stay in touch with Huaran is through email. The weavers meet on Saturdays, so that is the best day to visit. Within the community, they usually communicate by radio.

Contact: Sonia Ortiz Laime- President, email: sonylizoz_02@hotmail.com, tel:984-380966

Calca

K'anchay Wasi

Meaning "House of Light"

Partners since: 2007

Co-operative Goal Setting: *Plans Developed 2009*

Communication: *Frequent, Personal, Distant, Documented*

Relationship Status: *Goals Established*



Members of K'anchay Wasi Calca



photo credit Sarah Confer

Community Revitalization Project

2009: Plans Developed

This year, K'anchay Wasi would like to use the community revitalization funds to buy two floor looms. They would also like to run workshops on how to use the floor looms, and on how to make bags out of weavings. Each loom will cost about 1,800 soles, and will be purchased from someone in Sicuani. The looms will be purchased as soon as they have enough money to buy them. Half of the funds raised from their work with ProPeru will also be put towards this project. ProPeru is an international volunteer organization that works in the local area.

Future project goals:

In the future, K'anchay Wasi hopes that Q'ente can help them develop a program to help improve the quality of the drinking water in Calca. The water quality in Calca is very poor, and many children are getting sick from it. They hope that Q'ente can show the weavers how to treat their water, in order to prevent their children from getting sick.

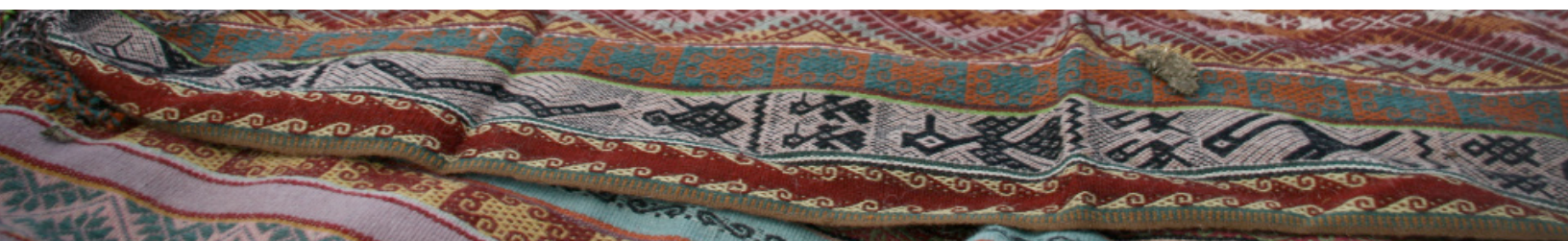
Relationship with Q'ente:

K'anchay Wasi chose to work with Q'ente because it gives the weavers an incentive to work more, and to produce more textiles. Because of Q'ente, more people in the community are learning to weave, and they enjoy having goals to work towards. Since they have not been working with Q'ente for long, they could not provide any suggestions for improvement. They hope to eventually become independent of both ProPeru and Q'ente to have their own, self-sustaining business.

Communication:

The best way to stay in contact with K'anchay Wasi is to contact Antonieta via telephone. If you can't contact Antonieta, contact her daughter Mercedes through phone or email.

Contact: Antonieta Gamarra Meza- the coordinator of the organization, Tel:202384 Mercedes (daughter) Morante Gamarra, Cell: 984327478, Email: Mercedes-morante@hotmail.com



Cancha Cancha

Acosición Yllaric Chaska

Meaning “Morning Star”

Partners since: *2009*

Co-operative Goal Setting: *Goals Defined 2010*

Communication: *Frequent, Personal, Distant, Documented*

Relationship Status: *Goals Established*



Victoria Quispe Ccorcca of Acosiacion Yllaric Chaska weaving at Frida's House in Huaran

Community Revitalization Project

2010: Plans Developed

Because Acosición Yllaric Chaska will only receive a small amount of money from sales this year, they plan on implementing a modest project. They will begin by purchasing some wool and weaving supplies. In future years, when they receive more funds, they will start to work on larger scale projects.

Future Project Goals:

Acosición Yllaric Chaska has a set of ambitious goals for improving their weaving association, as well as plans that will benefit the wider community. The next project they intend to take on will be to buy alpacas that have high quality wool. It takes less time to prepare the wool from alpacas than it does from other animals, and the wool is also softer. They would also like to build a weaving centre in Cancha Cancha where they could meet, sell textiles and hold workshops. Goals for the community include supporting their primary school in whatever way is needed. They could use Q'ente funds to supply furniture, for example, or to build a kitchen. They could also use it for the specific training of teachers, or for students. In order to have greater food security, they would like to raise small animals such as cuys, chickens and ducks. They would need to build pens to house these animals, and plant alfalfa to feed them.



Frida showing the difference between Alpaca and Llama wool



Textiles of Acosición Yllaric Chaska displayed in a tree

Relationship with Q'ente:

Acosición Yllaric Chaska choose to work with Q'ente because they feel that they are supported in the pursuit of their goals, but that the organization does not dictate or change their values. Frida Delgado Chirinos said, "Q'ente doesn't bring modernity to their projects or try to give them material goods. With Q'ente, there is the possibility of maintaining their traditions. With Q'ente's help they can continue in their own way, and by their own means." They hope that Q'ente can help the weavers to sell their textiles, strengthen their community values and adapt to climate change in whatever way they can.

Communication:

The contact for Cancha Cancha was Frida Delgado Chirinos, a wonderful women who lived in Huaran at the base of the trail to Cancha Cancha. She supported the weavers of Cancha Cancha with her enthusiasm and passion for helping the women and children of the community. She was particularly excited about working more closely with Q'ente, and becoming an avid volunteer. Recently, however, Frida was tragically killed by a drunk driver in Huaran. The communities of Cancha Cancha and Huaran are both grieving, and will miss Frida dearly. Frida's energy and courage will continue to inspire the work that Q'ente does, and all of those that loved her and knew her.

A new contact for Cancha Cancha will have to be established. One option is the president of the association, Victoria Quispe Ccorcca. Many of the women from Cancha Cancha speak primarily in Quechua, so finding someone who could translate from Quechua to Spanish would be important for effective communication.

Parobamba

Awak Warmis

Meaning “Women Weavers”

Partners since: *2009*

Co-operative Goal Setting: *Goals Defined 2010*

Communication: *Infrequent, Personal*

Relationship Status: *Contact Established*



Hiking in the Mapacho River Valley back from Parobamba

Community Revitalization Project

2010: Goals defined

Awak Warmis will not be receiving any funds this year, as very few purchases were made from Parobamba. They have defined some goals for future projects, however.

Future Project Goals:

The weaving association recently reformed this past year, and so there is a low level of organization among the weavers. While they are enthusiastic, it is difficult to know the goals of the whole association. The goals outlined in this document were the ideas of Dina Aragon Luayza, the Awak Warmis president, and those of Juan Samuel Mamani Mayo, the president of Parobamba. The weaving association's first goal is to build or obtain a place where the weavers can meet for meetings and to make textiles. There was a building previously built by a woman working within the community named Gail Silverman, which was intended to become a weaving centre. Once Gail left, the community took on the management of the building, but it is currently being used to house teachers. Dina wants to talk with Samuel, to see if he will provide land for another building.

Once they establish a weaving centre, they wish to create a dye garden and reforestation project. Community members recognize that many native plants are on the verge of extinction, and there is constantly less to harvest for the dyeing of wool. Samuel says that State organizations and NGOs do not place importance on plants. They would need to study the species and learn how each of them propagates before they could grow them. They would also need to learn about what kind of local conditions each plant thrives in. This project would require ongoing monitoring, but would contribute to the health of the local ecosystem.

Parobamba also has the long-term goal of implementing a large scale tour in the area. They have begun to brainstorm many attractions such as hot springs, ruins, lookouts, plant identification, bees, and weaving demonstrations. Tourism could act as an alternate form of income for the community. There is currently a Canadian mining company in the area, with a contract to investigate the profitability of a copper mine in the area. Having a mine in this remote valley would cause significant community and environmental change. The community is divided on their opinion of the mine.



Dina Aragon Luayza, president of Awak Warmis

Relationship with Q'ente:

The weaving association of Parobamba is somewhat wary of outsiders, due to negative past experiences with other organizations and individuals. For example, Parobamba has worked with Casa Ecologica in the past, an organization that sells local textiles based out of Cusco. Their work with the president, Franco, became a disappointment because they had to work with them on consignment. This meant that they provided many weavings but were not paid. They are still owed money, but haven't heard from Franco in over a year. The community is also wary to trust outsiders because of a negative experience with Gail Silverman. During Silverman's visit from the United States, she raised over 20,000 dollars. After working in Parobamba for about two years, however, Silverman took off with all the money. The weaving association then gradually disintegrated, because they weren't selling many weavings.

Awak Warmis is excited to work with Q'ente because they bring a positive proposal. Dina said, "the society does not marginalize or exclude anyone. Q'ente pays the weavers directly, not on consignment. This gives the weavers more direct incentive to produce weavings." Q'ente will have to gain Parobamba's respect and trust by maintaining frequent communication, and following through with community projects and goals.

Communication:

The best way to stay in contact with Awak Warmis is through the association president, Dina Aragon Luayza, or the Parobamba president, Juan Samuel Mamani Mayo via telephone.

Contact: telephone: 812622



Weavers listening into the Parobamba town meeting

Pitukiska

Asociacion Artesanal Mayuchaska Pitukiska

Partners since: *Indirectly through Casa Ecologica since 2006*
Directly since 2010

Co-operative Goal Setting: *Goals Defined 2010*

Communication: *Infrequent, Personal*

Relationship Status: *Contact Established*



Weavers gather in the centre of Pitukiska

Community Revitalization Project

2010: Goals defined

Asociacion Artesanal Mayuchaska Pitukiska will not be receiving money directly from Q'ente this year, because they were working indirectly through Casa Ecologica. Casa Ecologica is supposed to contribute a portion of funds back to the communities for community projects. Pitukiska has worked with Casa Ecologica for the past six years. Casa Ecologica, however, has not yet given any support towards community projects in Pitukiska.

Future Community Project Goals:

Weavers in Pitukiska have many goals for the weaving association, as well as for the community as a whole. Nearly all the members of the community are involved in the weaving association. The primary goal for their weaving co-operative is to have a weaving centre. In the rainy season, they don't weave very much because there is no place with adequate shelter, and they are concerned about the health risk that weaving outdoors will pose to the weavers. Many weavers get skin cancer and other health problems from weaving in the sun all day. The association would also like to have a building where tourists can stay with them, and where they can display their weavings and other products.

The weaving association's goals for projects that will benefit the whole community focus on improving their resources. Currently, Pitukiska has no electricity. They would like to look into sustainable energy production through wind and or solar energy. They would also like to implement some type of water filtering system. Currently, they boil all of their water for drinking. They would also like to build greenhouses for each family, so that they can grow a wider variety of crops. Currently, the whole community shares one greenhouse. The only materials they need to build more greenhouses are plastic, nails and wire. All the other required materials are readily available within Pitukiska. They think that the greenhouses will cost about 200s each.



Weavers preparing wool pattern in Pitukiska



Meeting and interview with Asociacion Artesanal Mayuchaska Pitukiska members

Relationship with Q'ente:

Similar to Parobamba, Pitukiska is worried about outside organizations. Their relationship with Casa Ecológica and Franco has been inconsistent and poor. Asociacion Artesanal Mayuchaska Pitukiska has worked with Casa Ecológica since 2006. The last time Franco came to the community was over a year ago, and he left without buying any textiles. Generally, members of the community have to go to Cusco to deliver weavings and pick up sales money. The weavers, however, are more optimistic about Q'ente because they pay upfront, rather than by consignment like Casa Ecológica. They are also excited about the idea of Q'ente giving money back to the community for projects of their choosing. In 2010, after a visit from Q'ente volunteers, Asociacion Artesanal Mayuchaska Pitukiska became an official direct partner with Q'ente.

Communication:

Pitukiska is a remote community which has no telephone or internet access. The best way to communicate with them is in person, or through Juan Samuel Mamani Mayo, who is the contact for the Mapacho region. Samuel would contact people in Pitukiska by sending someone to walk the three hours to the community. Melchor Ttupa Quispe is the representative of the weaving community.

Contact: Juan Samuel Mamani Mayo, telephone: 812622

Bombon

Tikay Pallay

Partners since: *Indirectly through Casa Ecologica since 2006*
Directly since 2010

Co-operative Goal Setting: *Goals Defined 2010*

Communication: *Infrequent, Personal*

Relationship Status: *Contact Established*



Meeting and interview with Tikay Pallay members in Bombon

Community Revitalization Project

2010: Plans developed

This year, Tikay Pallay plans to buy wool with the money they receive from Q'ente. They made this decision because they know they will not receive enough money to start a large project. This is because there were few purchases made last year.

Future Project Goals:

In future years, Tikay Pallay has many community projects which they plan to use Q'ente community funds for. First, they would like to build a place for the weavers that has a shelter. A weaving centre would be a permanent reminder of Q'ente within Bombon, and it could be shared by everyone. Next, Tikay Pallay would like to buy more alpacas and sheep. They currently purchase most of their wool from markets. Larger, long-term goals for the community include getting electricity for the town and building a water tank to irrigate their crops. The weaving association would like to work on building more contacts and on networking, so to build a more secure market in which to sell their textiles.



Weaver at work in Bombon

Relationship with Q'ente:

Tikay Pallay is beginning to establish their relationship with Q'ente as direct partners, rather than through Casa Ecológica as in the past. Like the other two communities in the Mapacho Valley, Parobamba and Pitukiska, they have had a negative relationship with Casa Ecológica. Franco owes them almost 2000s, and has not yet paid them or communicated with them. The weavers feel that they have received little benefit from working with Casa Ecológica. No one in the weaving association has been paid since 2005. They are now choosing to work with Q'ente because they pay the weavers directly when they buy the textiles, giving them greater security and more incentive to work.



Finished textiles on display in Bombon

Communication:

It is important for Q'ente to maintain frequent, honest and clear communication with weavers in Bombon in order to gain their trust. The best way to communicate with Tikay Pallay is by direct visits or over the telephone.

Contact: Vincente Pillco Illa, President of the weaving association

Telephone: 084-8403157

Past Partners

Over the course of the last year, Q'ente has stopped working with several organizations. This decision was due largely to prioritization of which communities to work with, and differences in goals between Q'ente and the other organizations. At this point, Q'ente is only able to support a limited number of weavers. Because of this, organizations that are already supported by other markets were found to be less in need of Q'ente's support. The Centre for Traditional Textiles of Cusco (CTTC) sells weavings from nine communities. They have a very similar mandate to that of Q'ente, because they are fair-trade, sell only naturally-dyed textiles, and give back to the communities that they work with. The CTTC is an excellent partner in providing advice and a framework for Q'ente. At this time, Q'ente has decided not to continue purchasing textiles from the CTTC, in order to better support the individual co-operatives that Q'ente works with. For this same reason, Q'ente has also stopped working directly with Awamaki, an organization that is selling textiles and providing support for a community near Ollantaytambo called Patakancha.

Casa Ecologica, an organization based out of Cusco, works with many communities in the Sacred Valley, Ausangate, and Mapacho Valley regions to provide alternative development through tourism and sales of their products. Recently, Casa Ecologica has shifted away from selling textiles, and towards a focus on tours to the community. The communities that Casa Ecologica worked with primarily to sell textiles have recently been receiving little support from the organization. Q'ente has begun working with these communities—Parobamba, Pitukiska and Bombon—on an individual basis. Q'ente has shifted its focus to that of an emergency relief organization providing support for communities that are most in need, and lack other markets for their textiles. Casa Ecologica's mandate also differs from Q'ente's, as they are a for-profit organization that donates about 5% of their income to social or environmental projects. Q'ente is a not-for-profit organization where all of the funds received go back to the weavers, the communities, and their education.



Weaving centre in Chinchero, a community, a weaving association partners with the CTTC

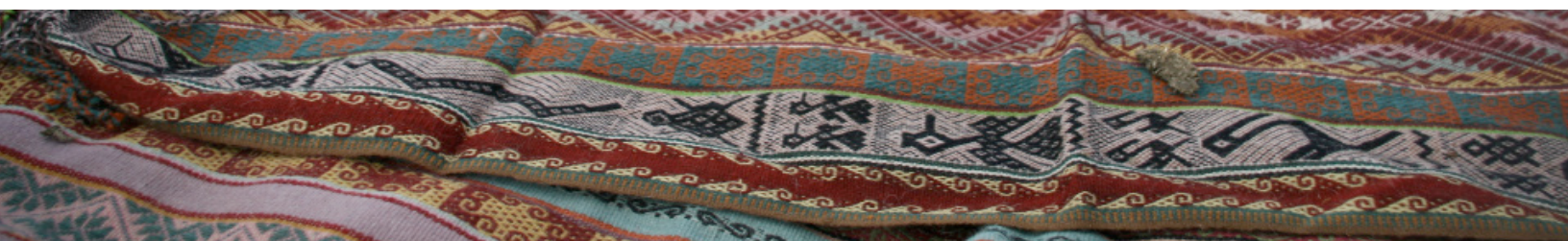
Q'ENTE INTERNAL PERSPECTIVE

An interview with Vice President Sarah Confer in 2010 provided some insight into Q'ente's strengths and weaknesses. Sarah characterizes Q'ente's relationships with the weaving co-operatives as transparent, open and mutually respectful. She considers Q'ente an equal partner of each weaving association, and a facilitator of their goals. Sarah identified Q'ente's strengths as uniqueness, volunteer commitment and acknowledgment of regionally distinct communities. She recognizes that their partners view direct purchasing of textiles rather than consignment as a major strength of Q'ente.

Sarah sees two main weaknesses in Q'ente: "1) lack of long-term funding for leadership positions, purchasing capital and the implementation of major projects, and 2) lack of a local representative to maintain consistent and direct communication with all communities." From the partners' perspective, these weaknesses manifest as lack of regular communication and irregular purchasing patterns.

Q'ente's ultimate goal is to support weaving co-operatives in their pursuit of becoming fully self-sufficient and independent. Initially, Q'ente strives to support weaving co-operatives by providing them with a market in which to sell their textiles in Canada. Next, they strive to help the associations create a network of other textile revitalization projects within the Cusco region. In the past year, Q'ente has reorganized its partners to better reflect their goal of supporting those weaving groups that require the most assistance in finding markets to sell their textiles. After taking on more weaving associations in 2009, Q'ente has focused its efforts on increasing sales by redefining their retail strategy. Q'ente is beginning to expand their market base by selling their products at local retail outlets. Q'ente is also continuing to participate in as many fairs and exhibitions as possible for the sake of sales, outreach and education. Q'ente has participated in 8 of these events since July 2010. Q'ente also plans to begin exporting textiles directly to Canada as of 2011 in order to avoid delays in receiving purchased textiles.

Q'ente textile sales were particularly low in 2009. This was largely due to the economic recession and delayed delivery of purchased textiles to Canada. Because of this, no new textiles were purchased in 2010. As of November 2010, 40% of textiles purchased in 2009 still remain unsold. One third of this 40% is being used to create sample packages for retail stores.



RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

Q'ente has grown a tremendous amount since their beginning in 2006. They have developed a strong set of goals that are specific enough to have a focus, while allowing for variation among the different communities that they work with. Q'ente is succeeding in its goal to impact the communities they work with, by helping them to follow through with community projects. While this objective is implicit in some of the other goals, such as stabilizing the economy and revitalizing the traditional Quechua tradition, it could be stated more explicitly. Q'ente representatives seem to be aware of both their strengths and weakness. Q'ente's main strengths are their committed volunteers, the diversity of the communities they work with, and the grassroots, flexible approach they take to fair trade, not-for-profit sales.

Some of the difficulties that Q'ente experiences stem from their strengths. For example, while they have a base of committed and hard working volunteers, it is challenging to maintain such a complex and highly involved organization without providing paid work. Several of the main volunteers work full-time without compensation, which is not sustainable in the long run. Q'ente needs to focus its efforts on securing external funding and grants for the volunteers, so that they can continue to contribute their energy and knowledge to the project. This past year, one volunteer, Mark Knudsen, has been looking into grants and funding for the project. It can be difficult to find grants for international NGOs, however, because most national government funds are reserved for local, in-country organizations.

The diversity of the co-operatives that Q'ente works with requires them to be flexible, but poses some issues when consistency is concerned. For example, the co-operatives have a wide variety of goals for their respective community projects—ranging from short-term projects to long term projects, to projects that involve the whole community or projects that only benefit the weavers. In order to ensure that the community projects are consistent with their goals, Q'ente could develop a set of criteria to help guide the co-operatives when choosing an appropriate project. It is not necessary for Q'ente to define whether or not the projects always have to benefit the entire community, but once the basic needs of the weaving association are met (such as shelter for weaving), co-operatives should attempt to work towards goals that would benefit the community as a whole. Q'ente could provide a written document to each weaving group that asks questions such as:

- What are the community's needs?
- How can the weaving association contribute to these needs?
- What are realistic projects that the weaving association can work towards?
- When can the project be completed?
- What materials are needed?
- How much will it cost?

Community revitalization projects should:

- Work towards meeting the needs of the community
- Have concrete objectives
- Improve social, environmental or physical well being of the community members



Many weaving groups suggested that they would like more guidance with their projects, and continued communication. Q'ente could help to guide communities by making sure their goals are realistic, helping to create a timeline for each project, and setting benchmarks to measure the achievements of these goals. As suggested by Sarah, a full-time Q'ente representative that stays in Peru would be extremely beneficial to the project. This individual could help Q'ente to stay in frequent and personal contact, thereby facilitating the logistics of community projects. This individual could also head up a volunteer program, where volunteers could assist in the implementation of community projects. The communities seem to value consistency in the volunteers they work with. By having one main contact that stayed in the region, Q'ente would create a consistent relationship with each community. Because many of these communities are isolated and lack regular access to the internet, communication by phone and email are difficult. This is one of the main reasons that the weaving co-operatives feel they lack consistent communication with Q'ente. Having volunteers that can act as a communication team within Peru would also help to build lasting and trusting relationships with the weavers.

The shift that Q'ente has made in recent years to support communities in need is necessary and important. It has been difficult, however, to build trust in new partners without purchasing many or any weavings from them in the first year of contact. In the future, having funds to purchase textiles from a new community before taking them on as a partner would be advisable. Q'ente took on six new communities in 2009: Q'enqo, Huaran, Parobamba, Pitukiska, Bombon and Cancha Cancha. Over the past two years, although they have not been able to purchase many textiles from these communities, they have been establishing relationships with each one, and helping the weaving co-operatives to develop goals and expectations for the partnership. By ending their partnerships with other organizations such as Awamaki, CTTC and Casa Ecologica, Q'ente will be able to focus more on supporting their current partners. Q'ente must continue to focus on collaborating with other organizations, however, in order to facilitate new connections and market networks for their current partners.

This report provides a written documentation of the achievements of the communities and their revitalization projects. Frequently updated documents for Q'ente supporters and weaving associations will help to provide accountability for Q'ente, as well as to demonstrate to the co-operatives the progress they have made. Documenting the impacts that Q'ente has made on the communities they work with can inspire motivation and momentum for continued improvement. Regular monitoring and impact assessments will build a documented history of Q'ente's work in Peru, and provide opportunities to ensure adaptive management.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Community information collected from interviews with each community in April 2010 by Allie Dickhout, Sarah Confer, Jose Luis and Thalia Christou

Q'ente facts and opinions collected from personal communication with Sarah Confer and Ashli Akins and the Q'ente website: <http://www.qentesociety.org/>

All photographs taken by Allie Dickhout in April 2010 with permission from individual in the photographs

Other consulted documents include:

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