

INKA MOSS PERU



714

families will benefit from working with Inka Moss and harvesting moss.

42

rural communities have gained access to an additional income, better infrastructure, goods and services.

Sphagnum Moss Helps Andean Communities Tap into Additional Income Sources

Andean communities in Peru live isolated in extreme poverty while having large hectares of sphagnum moss that they're not taking advantage of. Inka Moss improves the livelihoods of these communities by training them to become moss harvesters, providing them with the required technology, and buying their harvests at fair prices. Inka Moss in turn sells the sphagnum moss on the global market, where it is mainly used for the cultivation of orchids.

Before Inka Moss started to work with the Andean highland communities, they were unaware of the value of the Sphagnum moss. Given that their main traditional source of income is potato farming, they used to burn the moss to clear their fields and plant their other crops. This practice not only deprived them of an additional and more profitable source of income, it also degraded the soil,

destroying its natural nutrients and making it infertile after two or three harvests. Inka Moss explains the communities the value of the moss and trains them how to harvest it. A key aspect of the training is the sustainability of the harvesting as the moss plant needs time to regrow before it can be harvested again.

Increased Income, Better Infrastructure, Goods and Services in Rural Communities

Inka Moss' harvesters experience an income increase of approximately 25% through selling their moss harvests. The additional income from the moss harvest provides each family with the means to improve the quality and quantity of the food and therefore the health of the children. Aside from that, they can acquire modern equipment to take better care of their traditional crops, access technology that once was outside their reach, and it gives them the chance to provide their children with education beyond elementary school. Last but not least, the →



Mari

Moss harvester in the community of Curimarca

Julius Baer Foundation

For more than fifty years, the Julius Baer Foundation has dedicated itself to making meaningful and impactful contributions to society. The grant foundation of the Julius Baer Group was founded in 1965 by Walter J. Bär to support all forms of art and culture, various sciences and carefully selected charitable causes within Switzerland. The Foundation's reach has extended along with the growth of the Group, and, today it collaborates with partner organisations worldwide in the core areas of Vocational Training, Recycling PLUS and Wealth Inequality.

How you can contribute

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“We gather the moss from May through July because we are short of money during those months, we're not able to harvest potatoes during that time. Climatic conditions here make for very short harvest seasons and there are few opportunities to generate income. My son is now away at university and for him to do that, I gather moss, because I need that income.”

Mari is a moss harvester in the community of Curimarca, one of the 14 communities Inka Moss is working with. Inka Moss signs agreements with each harvester guaranteeing to purchase the moss at a fair price and assuring that part of the proceeds go toward a communal fund.

self-esteem of the settlers is greatly affected because they can truly see that there's a sustainable way for them to access new and better opportunities. This is especially noticeable in the women since they become an active and important part of their families' economy amongst a mainly male-ruled environment.

To date, Inka Moss sources from 14 communities directly impacting 240 families in the Andean region. Inka Moss plans to increase the number of communities in its production chain, for an impact on more families, while obtaining more raw material for production. Inka Moss plans to increase the number of harvesting communities to 42 over the next four years.

Facts and figures:

Peru and Andean Highlands

It is estimated that more than 8 million people remain poor in Peru. According to the National Institute of Statistics and Informatics, out of a 31.2 million population, the indigenous people in Peru represent about 25.7% (95.8% are Andean) and poverty is deepest among people of indigenous origin living in remote rural areas. Lack of

opportunities for rural people has caused a massive migration to urban centers, where market activity offers greater livelihood options. Today, three out of four Peruvians reside in and around urban areas. But while both urban and rural poverty affect Peru, food insecurity is chronic in rural regions, where many smallholder farmers produce basic food crops, mostly potato, at a subsistence level.

- Inhabitants: 31.2 million
- Capital: Lima
- Language: Spanish (and more than 300 indigenous languages in rural Peru)
- Youth unemployment rate (15–24 years): 8.6%
- Almost 50% of Peru's employees work in the least productive sectors: retail, restaurants and agriculture. Furthermore, the informality in Peru (60% of workers) is one of the highest in Latin America. Strong inequality defines both informality and working conditions, and young people with low education in rural areas are the worst affected

For more information about Inka Moss, please visit: www.inkamoss.com

“With the power of the villages, we will turn this world around.”

Proverb from the Andes