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## Diospi Suyana: A miracle for Curahuasi

December 19, 2014

By Roxana Garmendia

A district in the Apurimac region, Curahuasi has become the home to an innovative school and healthcare system thanks to a program run by a German couple.



Diversity found in the school is exemplary of its inclusive approach (Photo: Disopi)

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Apurimac is a region one doesn't hear much about despite its proximity to Cusco. Tourists – Peruvians and foreigners alike- tend to visit neighboring regions like Ayacucho, Cusco or Arequipa, rather than visit the land where 'God talks' – 'Apu' for God and 'Rimac' for talking. Likewise, most of the international assistance, including volunteer work by enthusiastic young men and women, goes inevitably to the Cusco Region. Nothing wrong with that, but perhaps we can take a closer look at Apurimac where assistance could translate into improved livelihoods of the local population, and be very much rewarding for the soul.

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Curahuasi(Photo: Disopi)

Eleven years ago, a German couple, Dr. Klaus-Dieter John and his wife Martina John, understood it that way. They started the construction of a hospital in Curahuasi, one of the nine districts in the Apurimac region that lies 2,600 meters high above sea level, and some two and a half hours away from Cusco. The project aimed at providing health services for the poor in the region. The couple travelled extensively to raise funds, and an association was even created in Germany, precisely to support the project. The hospital was finally inaugurated in 2007.

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HOY SE INAUGURA EL DIOSPI SUYANA, EL HOSPITAL MÁS GRANDE Y MODERNO DE LA OLVIDADA APURIMAC

# Milagro en Curahuasi

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Alfredo Carrasco.

En Curahuasi, un pueblo de 17 mil habitantes más allá del valle del valle de Apurimac, los campesinos se reúnen en un momento de gran alegría. El momento que inauguran el hospital más grande y moderno de la olvidada Apurimac. El Diospi Suyana, el hospital más grande y moderno de la olvidada Apurimac. El Diospi Suyana, el hospital más grande y moderno de la olvidada Apurimac.

El Diospi Suyana, el hospital más grande y moderno de la olvidada Apurimac. El Diospi Suyana, el hospital más grande y moderno de la olvidada Apurimac.

Curahuasi receives a miracle (Photo: Disopi)

Since then, men and women travel from different corners of the region –some even travel for 50 hours- to receive medical attention. In all these years, the hospital has provided health services to more than one million and a half patients that pay a mere S/. 5 each time they visit the hospital premises. At present, the Director serves 200 patients per day in its eight medical specialties. Not only that, as Christian Bigalke, Director of a school run by Diospi Suyana – the same organization that runs the hospital- points out, people receive high quality medical treatment, and are treated with humanity and due respect.



*The line extends in front of the Curahuasi hospital (Photo: Diospi)*

But the hospital is not the only good piece of news that is happening in Curahuasi.



*The beautiful view seen from the school's second floor (Photo: Diospi)*

There is a school that is run by Diospi that is attended by 180 boys and girls that come from the different corners of the Apurimac region to attend basic and elementary school. Not only that, but this school appears to be an example of an inclusive approach as students come from different social and economic backgrounds, and even nationalities – children of foreign staff working at the school and hospital – also attend classes.



*Children learn a wide variety of crafts and skills (Photo: Diospi)*

Each student pays the sum of S/. 120 a month to receive an education program duly certified by the Ministry of Education. However, teachers at this school are regarded as guides -rather than 'classic' instructors; they stay close to the student and guide their development, an approach similar to the Montessori methodology, Christian explained.

In addition to the regular curricula, students have a chance to choose from the twenty-five workshops that the school offers. These workshops range from violin and guitar lessons to handicraft and literature, and even workshops on how to prepare cheese and yogurt! Special attention is put on the social, cultural and historic surroundings as well as an education that highlights inclusiveness and human values.



*Music lessons are among the wide variety of offerings (Photo: Diospi)*

The holistic approach Diospi Suyana employs in their education program is also reflected in the 'School for parents' the school runs. Relevant topics such as alcoholism, sexual abuse, nutrition, family finances and educational support, are discussed at length.



*Family unity is strengthened through programs provided by Diospi (Photo: Diospi)*

The school was built by German architects and engineers free of cost to the Peruvian government. It has a beautiful gym, a computer room, and optimal furniture donated by Germany. Their lab, however, still needs to be equipped –something perhaps our readers would like to take due note.



*A large gym space receives natural light (Photo: Diospi)*

Readers interested in the project and wanting to support it, may also foresee sponsoring a student paying S/. 150, or 40 euros, a month for his or her education. As our interlocutor highlights, 100% of the donated money goes to the kids' education, and certainly does not cover any administrative costs. The donor can follow up on the student's performance as the contact with the student is direct. The donor will get a donation certificate and even a tax deduction (in the case of American citizens), for example.

Some 50 foreigners from different nationalities are already sponsoring students at this school. It is high time that this support is replicated by Peruvians and other well-hearted people. The target, Christian explains, is for the school to be able to serve 600 students all together. The number of students waiting for an opportunity to access the school is already high.

The professional staff at the school are all expats from different countries that come to Apurimac to carry out the work as 'volunteers' for three to five years. Likewise, the doctors are all foreigners that work along 110 Peruvian employees, among them nurses and support staff, at the hospital in Curahuasi. The German Government provides for the expenses of the foreigners during their first year. Donations go directly to the projects themselves Christian explains.



The school is largely staffed by foreigners and expats (Photo: Diospi)

To learn more about the project, take a look at their [Facebook](#), write them an email (colegio@diospi-suyana.org), or even better, pay them a visit where you will see for yourself the hospital and school facilities. Since you are in the 'neighborhood,' you may consider combining this well-purposed travel with some visit to the multiple touristic and natural sites this Andean region has to offer.



The surrounding area(Photo: Diospi)

And, should you have a few additional days to spare, you may even consider trekking all the way to the world famous Choquequirao Inca ruins – known as the 'sacred Macchu Picchu's sister'- right at the border with Cusco. Voilá, some ideas to make you feel good and healthy!

**TAGS:** diospi, school project, cusco, apurimac, peru, roxana garmendia, donate, curahuasi, volunteer, sponsor

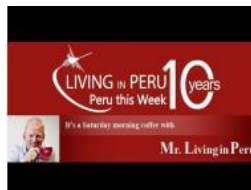
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We need more people like them, not only in Peru but in the whole world.

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Nice job guys, my family was from Apurimac, I think it was Andahuylas and Talavera, I like to visit one day soon.

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Szépek ezekben az iskolai egyenruhákban a perui diákok! :)

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Dios es grande y se ve la mano poderosa de estos dos alemanes que son usados para una obra tan benéfica como esta de DIOSPI SUYANA que quiere decir Confiamos en Dios.

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