

DE CALLE A CALLE

Equipping youth to serve as agents of change in their communities

THE CHALLENGE

Young people growing up in Peru's urban, low-income communities stand a good chance of becoming involved in risky behaviors (violence, delinquency, prostitution, gangs, drug selling, and consuming) at a young age. Many drop out before completing high school, are unemployed, and have few opportunities to spend their free time productively.

THE PROGRAM

To address these needs, the *De Calle a Calle* program works directly with children, youth, adults, and local community leaders to create a more positive environment with fewer risk factors. Over six years, the program seeks to enable 810 disadvantaged youth living in slums in Lima and Pisco to pursue healthy behaviours and participate more actively in their communities. The program identifies youth with leadership qualities who are already affiliated with youth groups, are enrolled in middle or high school, and who seek to improve their economic situations. It then works to develop participant's life skills, in order for them to become more confident and engaged in positive community activities. Participants engage in volunteer work with adults and children in their communities, with a subset provided with opportunities to learn technical skills and receive entrepreneurship training.



OUTCOMES

The program seeks to improve young people's life, leadership, and organizational skills; increase awareness among youth of risk factors in their communities and alternative activities; and provide select youth with employment opportunities. Secondary outcomes include improving the image of youth among adults and community leaders).

THE PARTNER

De Calle a Calle program is managed by the Center for Information and Education for the Prevention of Drug Abuse (CEDRO). CEDRO was founded in 1986 as a private, nonprofit organization whose mission is to foster healthy environments and educate the public on the consequences of drug production, distribution, and use. CEDRO's initiatives are characterized by strategic awareness building on the value of a healthy life style, strengthening family and community links, and youth participation.



RESULTS TO DATE

According to an outcomes measurement study conducted by Brandeis University in 2006, nearly all youth reported that the program had changed their life for the better. Two-thirds of respondents said they were working harder at school and providing more leadership and doing more community service. Youth reported statistically significant improvements in 7 out of 12 life skills, namely contribution, conflict resolution, cooperation, creative thinking, critical thinking, decision making, and self-confidence.

In addition, anecdotal evidence and interviews with community members show that the youth groups are stronger and more independent than before the program started, and the youth are more inclined towards doing community service with children in their neighborhoods. As a result of working with parents and local public offices, the program has significantly improved the perception adults have of youth. Focus groups with adults and youth also show that drug trafficking in these neighborhoods has been significantly reduced.

A major achievement of the program was the recognition it received in 2006 by the German Development Agency (GTZ) and the Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO) as a successful program working in disadvantaged Peruvian communities.

PROGRAM: *De Calle a Calle*
PARTNER: *Centro de Informacion y Educacion para la Prevencion del Abuso de Drogas (CEDRO)*
PERIOD: 1 November 2003 - 30 November 2009
LOCATION: Lima and Pisco
REACH: 810 youth, ages 16 - 20
MODEL: Youth community service