



Dining for Women

Program Fact Sheet: July 2007

Featured Program: Freedom from Hunger

Web Site: www.freefromhunger.org

Mission: Freedom from Hunger (FFH) brings innovative and sustainable self-help solutions to the fight against chronic hunger and poverty. Together with local partners, they equip families with resources they need to build futures of health, hope and dignity.

This mission directs Freedom from Hunger to bring self-help services to the poorest people in the world – especially those who live on \$1/day or less. FFH designs its self-help services for women—the primary caretakers of young children. They provide programs to equip women to succeed at the very thing they are already determined to do - feed their children, improve their families' health and create positive change in their villages. They have the greatest impact working with very poor people living in rural areas of developing countries where there are no social safety nets, no social security, no food banks, no welfare. There are many quality, domestic nonprofits that are making important strides in helping people alleviate their hunger in America. But Freedom from Hunger's role is to work to end the problem of chronic hunger globally – a tragedy that impacts a billion people around the world.

Note: Freedom from Hunger is a larger organization than the organizations we normally support, but they have agreed to direct our donations to a specific Credit with Education program in Peru. We gave special consideration to this organization because of a member's recommendation and because we believe that their mission and efforts very closely parallel our own.

History: Established in 1946, Freedom from Hunger is recognized for fighting hunger with innovative self-help programs. Throughout their history, they have been guided by evidence of impact, scientific rigor and a commitment to helping families achieve food security for the long term.

Originally they began as Meals for Millions, the organization that developed and introduced Multi-Purpose Food, a high-protein powdered food supplement still used today in relief efforts around the world. In the 1970s, FFH began implementing Applied Nutrition Programs, focusing almost exclusively on the health and nutrition of mothers and children. In 1988, Freedom from Hunger developed the world's first **integrated** microcredit, health and nutrition education program. Today, based in Davis, California, the *Credit with Education* program is serving nearly 500,000 families in 17 countries providing resources to those living in some of the poorest countries on earth. With the launch of their Reach for 3 Million Plan, FFH expects to expand programs to serve 3 million women and families.

Freedom from Hunger's focus is on women. After all, no one is working harder to end hunger than a mother with a hungry child. Freedom from Hunger helps her succeed. Research confirms that mothers tend to use new income and resources for the immediate benefit of their children, whereas husbands tend to use it for larger household or business purposes. By putting powerful resources – such as knowledge and financial services – directly into the hands and minds of women, FFH can help the entire family.

How They Work: Freedom from Hunger is best known for its proven self-help service, *Credit with Education* (CWE) now operating in 17 of the world's poorest countries. *Credit with Education* is Freedom from Hunger's worldwide strategy to bring self-help solutions to the fight against hunger--one family at a time. Research has confirmed that when women gain simultaneous access to microfinance *and* lifeskills training on health, nutrition and business management, their families are more likely to achieve self-reliance, food security and better health.

First launched in West Africa in 1988, this innovative program combines microfinance (cash, credit and savings services) with vital education in health, nutrition, business management and family finance. *Credit with Education* enables groups of women to launch and manage home-based businesses and empowers them with practical

information to make the most of their new income. Loans range between \$50 and \$300 and interest payments help keep the program financially sustainable. Women typically save \$1 for every \$4 they borrow.

FFH has trained more than 50 local organizations in 17 countries to establish microcredit, education and other services for poor, rural communities. By partnering with local microfinance institutions (MFI's) that share a commitment to serving groups of poor women, Freedom from Hunger has been able to reach rural, poor communities. They leverage the existing resources of the partnering MFI's; including local knowledge, dedicated staff, and a commitment to help train other organizations to expand these outreach programs. Together with the MFI's, Freedom from Hunger equips families with resources they need to build futures of health, hope and dignity.

(A more detailed account of Freedom from Hunger's programs, other than *Credit with Education*, is presented on their web site.)

Where They Work: FFH works in developing nations where chronic hunger is suffered by a large portion of the country's population. The focus is on rural regions where poverty and hunger are at their worst. The organization's programs and services are at work in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean.

Where DFW donations will be directed: Our donations will fund FFH programs specifically in **Peru**.



In the hardscrabble environment of the high Andes, families eke out their existence without year-round access to adequate food sources, strong markets or dependable health care. In the Peruvian regions of Junin and Huancavelica, where poverty is severe and widespread, FFH recently launched a *Credit with Education* program. The CWE program is expected to reach over 7,000 women through three local MFI's, offering groups of women affordable credit and lifeskills training in health, nutrition, business and household finance. Future plans include expanding CWE to 30,000 women in Peru who will bring the benefits of participation home to an estimated 150,000 family members over two years and continuing into the future.

Peru Facts:

- Located in western South America
 - Slightly smaller than the state of Alaska
 - Western coastal plains, central high rugged Andes, eastern jungle of Amazon Basin
 - Natural resources: copper, silver, gold, petroleum, timber, fish, iron ore, coal, phosphate, potash, hydropower, natural gas
- Natural hazards: earthquakes, tsunamis, flooding, landslides
 - Population: 28,674,757 (2007 estimate)
 - Population below poverty line – 54%
 - Government type: Constitutional Republic
 - Capital city is Lima
 - Illicit drugs: Until 1996, Peru was the world's largest coca leaf producer. Peru is now the world's second largest producer, lagging far behind Columbia.
 - Internal refugees: 60,000 (civil war 1980-2000) mostly indigenous peasants living in the Andean and Amazon regions
 - Mainline telephones: 2.25 million Cellular telephones: 5.58 million
 - Lake Titicaca, shared with Bolivia, is the highest navigatable lake in the world and largest in South America
 - The Lost City of Incas, Machu Picchu, is located in the Andean mountains

How They Measure Their Success: Freedom from Hunger meets or exceeds standards of the charity watchdogs, earning a four star Charity Navigator rating. They were also listed in *Worth* magazine as one of America's 100 best charities. FFH has conducted numerous impact studies on its programs showing significant gains in child nutrition, family food security, as well as increases in household income and improvements in women's self-confidence. For instance, in Ghana 90% of *Credit with Education* participants reported higher income and confidence in their health care knowledge. In the last 17 years, with over \$500 million borrowed, the women have repaid virtually every penny with interest.

Fiscal Operations and Efficiency: The *Credit with Education* Peru project budget for the upcoming fiscal year is approximately \$337,000. A private three year corporate grant secures nearly a third of the needed

funding, leaving FFH to raise \$242,000. Our contributions will help with this need. Overall, FFH administrative and fund raising costs account for 18% of total expenditures while 82% of expenses are directed to programs.

DFW Giving History with Program: New program recommended by a member of the Novato, CA Chapter.

Resources: The CIA World Fact Book; www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook
Peru Facts; www.perufacts.org
Freedom from Hunger Web Site; www.freefromhunger.org
United Nations Web Site; www.un.org/