



## Rurapuk in Peru: People Who Help Each Other

Rurapuk means “people who help each other” in Quechua, the language of the ancient Incas. The Rurapuk Project is run by AMURTEL in Lima, Peru. It is located in an area of Lima called Paraiso Alto, which is in a zone of extreme poverty. In Paraiso Alto, there is no running water or sewerage system and most of the people live in one-room shacks with dirt floors. The center of the Rurapuk Project houses the Rurapuk Hot Lunch Program which serves a free hot lunch to 30 children and 2 elderly ladies five days a week. It also is the meeting place for Rurapuk Mothers, a women’s handicrafts collective.

The newest program of the Rurapuk Center is the formation of a group of therapists who will treat and cure the local people of common conditions such as colds, digestive disorders, joint pain, and stress related issues. The primary form of treatment will be reflexology, accompanied by treatment with local medicinal plants, and diet therapy.

Doctor Mirtha Acosta, Peru’s best reflexologist, and Doctor Martin Corbacho, a local homeopathic physician, have just finished teaching the first series of classes. Eight participants have finished the series. In the last class, Doctor Mirtha asked the students if they had been practicing, and what results they had seen. Señora Julia described how she had cured her son’s cold. The youngest participant, 12 year old Karla, explained how she had cured her mother’s headaches.

Alicia Semanario, project participant, summed up the project: “We chose reflexology because it is low cost, low tech, and cures. We want to use medicinal plants because Peru has an abundance of them and they are accepted as part of our culture and history. Good healthy food is important for everyone. What you eat is what you become. Our purpose is to make a team of therapists who can cure simple fevers and pains because the people in Paraiso don’t have money to buy medicine or see a doctor.”



The local community learn reflexology



Face painting brightens up the day at the Rurapuk Center

*For more information on AMURTEL’s work in Peru  
please visit*

[www.rurapuk.com](http://www.rurapuk.com)  
[www.machupicchustars.com](http://www.machupicchustars.com)

## BETTER WORLD PROGRAM, Padang Indonesia

AMURT & AMURTEL sent an emergency response team to Padang, Indonesia immediately after the earthquake in West Sumatra on 30 September 2009. After the initial emergency response period, AMURTEL identified a need for Early Childhood Development (ECD). Those children most vulnerable after a disaster of this magnitude need the structure, safety, and support an Early Childhood Program (ECD) can provide. The Indonesian government was unable to include this important sector in its reconstruction budget and plans, so AmurTEL chose this as our long term focus. Our project objectives are:

- To provide conditions for the optimal development of preschool/ kindergarten-age children physically, mentally and socially;
- To help upgrade and promote the spread of ECD Centres in West Sumatra by working with Education Department and Association of Preschools (HIMPAUDI) officials; and
- To lay the foundation for a better world by nurturing happy and healthy children and offering them a better quality of life, through the ECD Centres.



Children in the Better World program practice long exercise routine

### Children for a Better World (ECD Program)

The program is called “Children for a Better World” as the goals include supporting this next generation of young Indonesians as they grow into well-adjusted, confident adults, able to contribute to improving the quality of life for their community, their country and the whole world.



AMURTEL is strengthening the teaching capacity of members of the local association of pre-school teachers

AMURTEL started by establishing three ECD centres with a combined total of 140 students and 12 teachers. We constructed new semi-permanent buildings for each, replacing the previous school buildings which were destroyed in the earthquake. We also provided a hot meal and milk for the each of the children attending the schools. Over the months, we have gradually introduced a healthier diet by increasing proportions of nutrition-rich red rice and decreasing amounts of nutrition-deficient white rice and also reducing the quantities of sugar and salt in the children’s meals.

Part of the ECD program is to work with the children on becoming more conscious of environmental issues. The amount of garbage littering the streets and countryside has become a big problem in the area. We are happy to report the children in our centres are beginning to throw garbage into trash cans instead of simply littering anywhere and everywhere as is the norm in their community. We are also encouraging exercise and movement in the classrooms. The older children are now able to perform a long exercise routine as well as perform many songs with accompanying hand expressions. Arts and crafts provide lots of practice in fine motor skills and lots of creative fun and satisfaction.

Recognizing that input from the teachers and mothers is integral towards the optimal development of the children, AMURTEL has created a 3-pronged approach for the “Better World” program. “Teachers for a Better World” and “Mothers for a Better World” have become foundations stones for the “Children for a Better World” program.

## Teachers for a Better World (Teacher Training Program)

From 12 teachers at three schools, we expanded our outreach through the local HIMPAUDI (the Indonesian Association of Preschools) network. Currently we are training 53 teachers from 40 schools.

Since most of the participating teachers were high school graduates with little or no training in early childhood development and with low self-confidence, we began with a one-month module in ECD songs (accompanied by movement and dance, to capture the children's interest), exercise and arts & craft. The goals were to give the teachers practical skills that could be easily learned and immediately applied in the classroom with tangible results. This approach proved an outstanding success. The teachers were able to transfer what they learned to the children and gained greater self confidence in their role as teachers.

Topics covered in the second module of our teacher training program included Preschool Curriculum, Teaching Strategies, Evaluation Techniques, Education-related Administration, Schedule Planning and Learning Theories. This proved heavy-going for the teachers, but focus on concrete activities to illustrate theory helped them grasp educational concepts and skills and to apply them in the classroom. Our 53 teachers are now familiar with the national preschool/kindergarten curriculum and are gaining confidence in working with the children in a fun and loving way.



Indonesian teachers practice new songs

## Mothers for a Better World (Women's Program)

This program started with a lecture series on health, nutrition, hygiene, family planning and the importance of Early Childhood Education. At the mothers' requests, we also organized weekly aerobics sessions which the women thoroughly enjoyed. There was a strong interest amongst the women to learn more about diet and most everyone wanted to lose some weight. This provided a great opening to bring in discussions on nutrition, and the importance of giving the children water instead of sweet drinks and to cut out the empty calorie snacks. AMURTEL distributed heavy-duty garbage cans in our Environmental Awareness program to encourage the mothers to help with the trash problems in their communities. The mothers were also given reusable plastic glasses and water dispensers with 5 litre water containers in an effort to help reduce the use of the insidious disposable plastic bottles that are becoming a very real environmental problem.

At a recent outing, the women carried 5-litre water bottles to the field instead of resorting to disposable plastic bottles. It was especially heartening to see one of the mothers pouring water for her young son from her own giant water bottle into a tumbler we had provided her!

AMURT & AMURTEL Padang is now constructing 15 new ECD buildings and repairing six others. We will be providing them with furniture, playground equipment and educational materials. The mothers, the teachers and especially the children are heartened to see the ECD program expand and flourish.

*For more information on our work in Indonesia please visit [www.amurt.asia](http://www.amurt.asia)*

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*Gifts can transform  
lives of desperation  
into lives of hope*

## Multitherapy Charitable Health Centre, India

Abha Seva Sadan Multitherapy Charitable Health Centre (ASSMCH) located in Kashijharia village, Jharkhand State, has been offering treatment in Acupuncture, Homeopathy and Allopathy (Western medicine) since May 2005. Recently physiotherapy was added. In 2009, 11,035 patients were treated with an average of 919 patients treated per month and 44 the highest number in one day.

Physiotherapy services were provided once a week, but now with overseas sponsorship we are able to offer them 3 days a week. The treatment helps rehabilitate children suffering from cerebral palsy as well as many adults with arthritis and degenerative disease. 90-95% of the villagers suffer from chronic malnutrition, which contributes to their health problems.

We are expanding our educational programs which help break the vicious cycle of disease due to poor nutrition and unhealthy food habits. We continue to have weekly screenings of our nutritional education video (which is a comedy drama) for 100-300 villagers. The video teaches how to overcome vitamin deficiencies by consumption of the green leafy vegetables growing freely in their surroundings, thus preventing high doctor and pharmacy bills.

Every year during World Nutrition Week (Sept 1-7), we organize special nutritional educational programs. In the clinic this past year, we partnered with the NGO CARE to hold an interactive talk on how to recognize and overcome malnutrition, followed by an indoor screening of our nutritional video. Then our staff demonstrated how to prepare several nutritious as well as delicious dishes which were served to all attending villagers. There was also a presentation on the nutritional benefits of a herbal garden and how to utilize herbs as food supplements.



Parents of disabled children learn stretching and massage techniques

For more on ASSMHC please visit  
[www.rural-health-india.org](http://www.rural-health-india.org)



Mother's Day seminar for women on nutrition, hygiene and health education.

A special program demonstrated the benefits of green herbs and leafy vegetables to 100 high school students.

In February of this year we held camps in our clinic for those with handicaps. We have, along with another NGOs, been working with the poorest villagers in helping them receive financial aid that is available, after proper applications have been submitted. The process is very difficult for the average villager. Now more than 400 handicapped villagers have been seen and registered by doctors.

The monsoon season is the busiest due to the planting of medicinal herb gardens. There are a total of 70 herb varieties in the medicinal herb garden and 22 in the nutritional herbal garden.

6 solar panels were recently purchased which can provide for half our energy needs. We have purchased 5 additional panels for use on our clinic roof. This has ensured a certain amount of electricity for the clinic when the state-provided electric goes out.



**APPEAL:** These projects need your support. Please make a donation to our offices or online.

**AMURT** • 2502 Lindley Terrace, Rockville MD 20850, USA • +1.301.738.7122 • [www.amurt.net](http://www.amurt.net) • [info@amurt.net](mailto:info@amurt.net)

**AMURTEL** • PO Box 232, Warren VT 05674, USA • +1.802.496.7664 • [www.amurtel.org](http://www.amurtel.org) • [info@amurtel.org](mailto:info@amurtel.org)