



## Volunteer in Peru with Indigenous Children - Learn Spanish, teach children and explore South America

### Översikt

Volunteering in Peru will see you teaching children in the 'pueblos jóvenes' or 'young towns' that surround the beautiful colonial city of Arequipa, nestled in south-western Peru into a stunning region in which the desert meets the foothills of the Peruvian Andes. This volunteer program runs in conjunction with leaders and teachers of the communities, to assist educational reinforcement programmes. As well as running 'aulas abiertas' (open classrooms), volunteer work in Peru also assists the understaffed schools of the region.

### Projektet

Please note: our education projects in Peru are unique to Global Vision International. All funding of these projects comes directly from Global Vision International and volunteer contributions, included in the programme fee. We receive no other outside source of income, apart from that raised through GVI and volunteer contributions. Suffice to say, without this funding from GVI and the volunteer contributions, the projects simply would not exist.

#### Who We Are Helping and Why

Each year, thousands of people migrate from the Sierra and the Altiplano to try to find work in Arequipa, though due to language barriers (they are Quechua-speaking as opposed to Spanish-speaking), cultural differences and illiteracy, they find it very hard to integrate themselves into local life. Therefore 'pueblos jóvenes', or new villages or towns, are springing up outside Arequipa. They are a type of stepping stone from the Sierra to Arequipa. Most of the housing doesn't have electricity, running water or other amenities, but with the \$3 a day they earn from agriculture, they are slowly but surely building up a new life in these towns, learning Spanish and receiving education in the local schools.

Due to the ever-growing quantity of children requiring education, language barriers and the low standard of teaching; the education they receive isn't good, and many children leave early or do not receive the level required to gain employment in Arequipa. Many of the parents have never received an education, so cannot help the children with their homework. Furthermore, many parents cannot afford to get the basic school supplies or school uniform needed for their children which, by law, the children must have to attend school.

The schools themselves can have up to 250 children of all different abilities and language skills. A handful of teachers are charged with teaching them all and bringing them all through the school year – a very demanding and often impossible task, especially due to the scarce school supplies. Some children only speak a smattering of Spanish, but there simply isn't time to give the personalised attention they require, and they don't receive help from home.

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## En volontär berättar

"I spent the month of June volunteering at one of the two schools sponsored by GVI. Since I was only in Arequipa for 4 weeks, and since my Spanish language skills were already sufficient for teaching at the school, I decided to forego the Spanish School option and spend all four weeks teaching at the school. At first, I was a little intimidated at the prospect of teaching every subject (including Math, Communications, Arts & Crafts, Social Sciences), in Spanish. But within the first week, I was able to start teaching various things on my own, and quickly picked up the pace. With the help of other volunteers who were already there, of Carla (GVI project manager), and of the Peruvian teachers at the school, I was able to create lesson plans and execute them. I taught Grade 3 on my own -- since there were only 4 students in Grade 3, it was not too difficult.

My favourite "teaching accomplishment" is that I taught Fractions during Math class, in Spanish! The children at the school are absolutely wonderful. They range in age from 5 to 14. Most of them have difficult family situations and come from poor homes. But they are ALL very affectionate, and love the volunteers. Every morning, I was greeted by happy shouts of "Señorita! Señorita! Buenos dias!" which never failed to put a smile on my face. They are eager for an education, and appreciate what the teachers and volunteers are doing. Sometimes, they need a little bit of extra motivation to learn -- they don't always believe that "they can do it!". In response, the volunteers offer a lot of positive feedback. My goal when teaching the kids was never to ask for perfect scores, but to look for improvement from day to day. I was very proud of their accomplishments, and I could see just how excited they were at their own progress.

On a daily basis, the volunteers meet at the Casa de Avila in the morning, from where they leave for the schools. They get dropped off at the schools around 8:20, and teach lessons until recess at 11 (sometimes by themselves, or in some cases, jointly with other volunteers, depending on the grade and number of kids). At recess, the volunteers help distribute milk and bread rolls, and fruit, to the kids. Then at lunch, the volunteers also help at the "comedor", or dining room, while the kids eat the hot lunch provided by GVI. After lunch, the volunteers help the kids wash. The kids have learned to wash their hands, face and hair, and to brush their teeth. It was actually one of my favourite times of the day -- the kids loved to wash up, and yes, they could sometimes get into mini-water fights... :-). The rest of the afternoon was spent helping the kids do homework (at school). After a bit of cleaning up and planning for the next day, Rene came back to pick us up at 4pm. The days flew by -- it was hard work, but I found it very rewarding.

It was very difficult to say good-bye to the kids when I left... My homestay family was fantastic. I stayed with a wonderful couple whose children were no longer living at home. The house was very comfortable, and I had my own room and bathroom. I had breakfast and dinner at home every day, and found that my Spanish improved very quickly. I had my own set of keys and could come and go as I wished. The city of Arequipa is quite beautiful, and has many interesting sites to visit, including the Santa Catalina Monastery, the Cathedral, the Plaza de Armas and the museum of uanita the Ice Maiden. It's also close to Colca Canyon, and three mountains, El Misti, Chachani and Picchu Picchu, surround the city. There is no shortage of fun activities to do in the city and nearby. The Colca Canyon hike is included in the GVI "program", and it's excellent. I also climbed Chachani with another volunteer on one of the weekends, and it was spectacular. Another GVI excursion took us to Picchu Picchu and the Las Salinas salt flat -- amazing...

I wish I could have stayed longer, and I would go back in a heart beat! GVI (with Carla at the helm) was fantastic -- the organization offered great support, and provided a lot of resources to help with the teaching, not to mention with occupying one's spare time in the most entertaining of fashions. The Casa de Avila hostel serves as a great central meeting point - not only before going to school in the morning, but for internet access, help with coordinating activities in the city, BBQs on the weekend etc.

GVI and its local partner Armando offered many resources there, and often the volunteers would meet to plan lessons, use the computer, find school books and other teaching aids etc. In short, I found that the volunteers were very well supported, and that help was available whatever the question or problem."

Helene Barrette

## Vilken skillnad gör detta projekt?

As with our similar projects in Latin America, our aims are first and foremost in education, and pay particular focus on literacy and educational reinforcement for the children of each community. Global Vision International, with the full support of the leaders of the communities and the schools, aims to tackle these issues. As GVI's volunteers actually do the teaching alongside the local teachers and on their own, we can group the children by age and grade, to pay closer attention to the children and the required subjects, and identify those children who require further help. Coupled with paying for the school supplies, it is hoped that more children will attend and will receive the attention needed for their standard of education to improve.

## Höjdpunkter

Living with a host family; learning Spanish (optional); teaching and helping indigenous children and adults; exploring the spectacular Peruvian region on the side trips by bike, foot and on horseback. Taking cultural workshops and excursions. Amazing community interaction.

## Plats

You will be based in Arequipa, Peru's second most important city. It is located just over an hour's flight, or 13 hours by bus, south of Peru's capital city Lima, between the desert and the Peruvian Andes. You will study (if learning Spanish) and live in Arequipa whilst travelling to nearby communities, or 'pueblos jovenes', to undertake the teaching projects.

## Ute i fält

Living with local families in Arequipa in basic, but comfortable, accommodation will enrich your cultural experience and provide you with the valuable opportunity to practice your Spanish! You will have your own private room, hot water and three meals a day will be provided when with the family. The food is very typical of the area, and is varied, including meats, plenty of vegetables and fruits. Vegetarians are also well catered for. All volunteers live near each other in the same neighbourhood, which is a 10 minute walk to the Plaza de Armas, and also a 10 minute walk to the Spanish School and pickup point to travel to work. Travel upgrades are available on this project, please see dates and costs for more information.

## Förkunskaper

Spanish classes are ESSENTIAL for those Volunteers with no previous Spanish experience and highly recommended for those who want to brush up on their Spanish language. For stays of 4 weeks and more, the Spanish course is 40 hours. For stays of 3 weeks or less, the course is 10 hours.

*En stolt kille visar hur han borstar tänderna*



## Livet på projektet

Volunteers need to arrive in Arequipa on a Saturday. From Lima, you can fly (1 hour) or take a bus (13 hours) to Arequipa, where you will be met by the GVI project manager in Arequipa. There will be two transport pickup times from the airport on the Saturday: one in the afternoon and one late at night, to cater for the different arrival times of the flights, yet it is preferable that you arrive in the afternoon. On arrival, you will be transferred to the hotel in Arequipa. On Sunday, you will be introduced to your host family and shown around the important areas of Arequipa, including the internet, banks and other necessities, before being left to explore yourself. That night, we will all meet up for a welcome supper in the Plaza de Armas.

Once Spanish classes are completed, or you are not taking the Spanish classes, you will work in the chosen community from Monday to Friday. Days begin early, eating breakfast with the host family before you meet the pickup at around 7.15am and travel to the designated communities, situated about a 30 minute drive along semi-paved roads, to begin classes at 8am. Morning lessons are interspersed with breaks and finish at 1pm, whereupon you will have a short break for lunch, before the 'aula abierta' sessions, which continue until 3.30-4pm. After this, you will return to Arequipa.

The subjects you teach in lessons range from literacy, numeracy, English, art, geography, and sport. Full curriculums, class subjects and help from the local teachers are provided. As class sizes are so large, there are many children who find it difficult to keep up, so you will take smaller groups of children and help them with their work in hand, whilst the teachers can continue with normal classes. You will do most of the teaching, aided for the first few days by the formal teacher, existing volunteers and the GVI project manager.

The 'aulas abiertas' will be split into two areas. The first is dedicated to those children who need reinforcement and help with homework from the morning's classes, as well as children and adults who have never been to school or have had to leave school prematurely due to financial constraints or work-related reasons. The second aim of the 'aula abierta' is to offer English classes to increase the local community's chances of employment in Arequipa's growing tourist industry.

No formal teacher-training is required, as each volunteer will be supported by the GVI project manager, existing volunteers and the local teacher for the first few days. Resource books, the relevant materials and a curriculum will be available for the volunteers' use. A weekly meeting is also held to discuss structure, swap ideas and to work on the following week's classes, although the GVI project manager will be around all week to offer advice and help.

Also included is a 'material scholarship' for one child to go to school for a year. Education is free in Perú but the materials are not, yet must be provided by law, which is one of the main reasons children do not attend school.

## Foton från projektet



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