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SSUNS

General Assembly: Special Session on Indigenous Affairs

Peru

Topic 1: Indigenous Peoples, Healthcare, Mental Health, and Wellness

There are 28.2 million people living in Peru, and 14% of that 28.2 million is made up of indigenous peoples. Native people in Peru have less rights than the average Peruvian citizen. One example of this discrimination is found in healthcare. 46.5% of these indigenous people have no form of health insurance whatsoever. Living in remote parts of the jungle leaves these people especially vulnerable to disease and infection; and without health insurance or access to modern medicine, there is no way to prevent it.

Health education among these people is poor. Although many tribes, villages, and communities have alternative healthcare resources (like a "medicine man") this is no comparison to modern science. Many of these people are not educated about the advantages of Western medicine, as many say they believe their traditional practices are equal or superior to modern practice. One study showed that 49.7% of people were not aware that mosquitos carried malaria. Only 22.9% of interviewed people knew that condoms help prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS. Overall, indigenous people need to be more educated about healthcare.

Many projects have been launched throughout the Amazon to bring medicine to these native people, however, not much has been done on a larger, governmental scale. The U.S based Rainforest Health Program, and other philanthropic ventures have done little to help the issue.

Getting the government to recognize that indigenous people are citizens and they have rights as well will be a major victory for indigenous people. Once the government recognizes their rights and that they need help, the next step is making healthcare physically accessible to native people

NGOs like the Clinton Health Access Initiative, which works to improve the lives of individuals living with HIV/AIDs in the developing countries, would be able to make contributions toward HIV/AIDS clinics in more remote areas of the Amazon. Making just a small amount of clinics available in more remote places would help to improve the lives of thousands. The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Doctors Without Borders are also NGOs that would greatly help in the development of clinics and spread of healthcare education.

There are many ways one can pay for healthcare. Since many native people are unemployed, it is hard to secure health insurance. Making health insurance available to all is a difficult, arduous task for most governments. Therefore, microfinancing would be the most beneficial option in this case. By providing individuals with small loans with little to no interest rates, they would be able to pay for their own healthcare in hospitals outside of the provided clinics. Microfinancing has a proven return rate 90% of the time. It has also been proven to work best in developing second and third world countries.

With Microfinancing, education, NGO-funded clinics, and governmental help, it is possible to make healthcare accessible to all.

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Topic 2: Indigenous Land Rights, Climate Change impacts and Environmental Protection of Resources

The Peruvian Amazon is a very diverse rainforest filled with an abundance of natural resources. One of the resources that once filled the area was rubber. Rubber trees once covered the land, but now make up only a small percentage of the ecosystem's population due to deforestation. Indigenous people once used a vast majority of these resources, like the rubber trees, until large companies and other governments came in to claim these resources as their own. Not only do these outside consumers with a high demand strip the indigenous peoples of their land and resources, but it also sends them into forced labor. Epidemics also often follow large booms in any industry intervention with the environment. Loss of resources, forced labor, and large epidemics due to outside forces are only a few of the problems facing native people in the Peruvian Amazon.

The Peruvian government receives a large sum of money from foreigners coming in and taking natural resources, but they are not always informed of the harm it will do to native people. There has been very little past government action in Peru on this topic. Educating Peruvian citizens, government, and natives should help greatly.

Placing a tax on goods like oil and rubber will dissuade others from trying to pull it from the ecosystem. Establishing laws that prevent forced labor will protect native Peruvians from being pushed into work they do not want to do. Providing funding like Microfinancing for small communities and individuals in remote parts of the jungle will help indigenous people's economies, so they do not have to give up land or be forced into labor. New government policy

will help indigenous people lay claim to their land, so they do not have to give up oil rights to anyone.

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Topic 3: Indigenous Peoples, Poverty, and Development

Peru is a middle-income country with a large population of its indigenous peoples living below the poverty line. It ranks 77th on the United Nations Development Programme's 2012 Human Development Index. Some other things effected by rural poverty are: high rates of illiteracy, particularly among women, lack of essential services, like education and electrical power insecure rights to land, forests and water, poor infrastructure and marketing systems, and a lack of well-defined territorial organization and planning. The poorest Peruvians are the indigenous Quechua and Ayamara, who live in the Andean highlands.

Most rural populations and poor due to lack of education. A large majority of the indigenous population is illiterate. There is also a lack of jobs. There are no high paying jobs in these remote communities, and the jobs that are offered require no education. If schools are made more accessible, children will be able to break the poverty cycle, and will be able to become higher members of society as adults. Putting more taxes towards something as simple as paving more roads would make school more accessible to children, as there is no direct route from any rural village to a city. Convincing parents that education is imperative is also another major step to breaking the cycle of poverty, as many of these adults believe their traditional ways are suitable to everyone. Education is a major key in breaking the cycle of poverty.

The country has a positive relationship with the World Bank. With both Microfinancing on a small scale, and large bonds with 0% interest on a large scale, communities will be able to get on their feet as a whole to break the cycle of poverty. Once the people are educated and have secured well-paying jobs, they will be able to pay back these micro-loans and bonds. the World Bank would be the most beneficial organization to partner with.

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