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PERU: A COCA GROWER'S PREDICAMENT

VIDEO

WS PERU MOUNTAIN
SHOTS OF INCA COMMUNITY

CU COCA PLANTS

MULTIPLE SHOTS OF DRUG
TRAFFICKING

HECTOR ORE ON CAMERA

AUDIO

NARRATION

Coca cultivation has a long history in Peru and a significant place in its culture. The Incas used coca for religious and medicinal purposes. (9.5")

But the coca leaf is also the basis of cocaine, organized crime and insurgency movements, facts Peruvians know all too well. Twenty years ago, insurgents used profits from drug trafficking to fuel a vicious civil war. (15")

During that time, Hector Ore was a coca farmer and a drug trafficker in the infamous region of San Martin. (7.5")

HECTOR: (Spanish) **M**

"...I was working for a company and would produce weekly probably about 1,500 kilos of cocaine base. Sometimes we would fill up four or five flights headed for Colombia and then Europe." (17")

COCA PLANTATION

NARRATION

Since then, the Peruvian government's eradication measures have cut the coca leaf production in half.

COCA FARMERS WORK

With assistance from the UN many coca farmers have been able to give up their coca fields voluntarily and learn how to grow other crops.

CLEANING THE PLANTATION

MIRELA SPEAKS TO FARMERS

Flavio Mirela, the Representative of the UN Drugs and Crime office in Peru. (20.5")

FLABVIO MIRELA ON CAMERA

MIRELA: (English) **M**

"...about 15,000 people have been weaned off an illicit, informal economy; one that's based on a single crop..." (6.5")

ABEL DIAZ WITH SON ON THE
COCA PLANTATION

NARRATION

But for some cocaleros, like Abel Diaz, who lives deep in the Peruvian jungle, moving into licit crops is easier said than done. (8.5")

ABEL ON CAMERA & VOICE OVER

ABEL: (Spanish) **M**

"When I was 11 years old ...My father had a friend in Huallaga; there I found out about coca leaves and started harvesting during my school vacations."
(14)

ABEL CHECKS HIS COCA
PRODUCE

NARRATION

Today, Abel owns six hectares, or almost 15 acres of land. Most are coca fields. Other crops don't grow well here, in the jungle. The only money Abel earns comes from coca and poverty is evident in his family's living conditions. (18.5")

WS ABEL'S HOUSE

ABEL COLLECT COCA LEAVES

Why does Abel have such a hard time making a living? He sells about a fifth of his coca crop legally, to Enaco, a government-owned company that converts coca leaves into tea, colas and medicines. But the company pays farmers very little and demands leaves that are higher in quality than those Abel grows. (22")

VAR. SHOTS INSIDE ENACO
WAREHOUSE

ABEL PICKS COCA FRUITS AND
LEAVES

So most of what he produces – about 120 kilos of coca leaves every three months – he sells illegally to the traditional market for chewing. Abel says selling to the black market is sometimes his only option because drug traffickers are not as picky about the quality of the crop. (19")

A FARMER HAULING PRODUCE
ON CART

But for some coca growers, the decision to quit the illegal trade was clear. (5")

SHOTS OF FARMERS CLEANING
THEIR COCA CROPS/CU SHOT
OF ILLEGAL COCAINE

Hector Ore says he used to make money from the black market as well. But his family lived in constant fear of police and government raids on the one hand, and rebel groups on the other. (12")

WS AMAZON RIVER AT PUCALIPA
BOATS & PASSENGERS

So he moved his family to a busy city in the Peruvian Amazon...Pucallpa. This is where he came across a United Nations palm oil project helping former coccaleros. (11")

WS PALM TREES/PLANTATION

PALM HARVEST/CONVEYOR

The beginnings were hard. Palm trees take three to four years before the first harvest. Today, 16 years and more than 22 hectares or 54 acres of palm trees later, Hector is a shareholder in this palm oil

processing plant here. (17")

HECTOR ON CAMERA

HECTOR: (Spanish) **M**
"To all farmers involved with coca, I say: change to palm!With palm trees you are always clean and proud.You won't be afraid of justice chasing you." (17")

HECTOR WALKING

NARRATION
What worked for Hector, may not work for Abel. According to experts, palm trees probably would not grow here, but "cacao" or cocoa might. Crops to substitute coca are largely determined by the soil and the altitude of any given area. The Peruvian government, with the help of the UN, is trying to find alternatives that can be sustained in the long term. (24")

ABEL WITH SON

CACAO BEING LOADED ON TO TRUCK

UN LOGO

This report was prepared by Sasa Gorisek for the United Nations. (4)