

The only opportunity: Maternal health and integrated early childhood development



UN Trust Fund for Human Security



Fast Facts

Country: Peru

Duration: May 2002 to April 2004

Implementing UN Agencies: UNICEF

Other Implementing Partners: Ministry of Health; Ministry of Education; Ministry for Women and Human Development

Budget: \$707,000

Key Words: Access to health care; women; children

BACKGROUND

Poverty in Peru is highly concentrated in the Andean region where close to half of the population lives in extreme poverty, particularly in the department of Apurímac. Although significant progress had been made during the 1990s, the disproportionate impact of poverty on children and women was evidenced by high rates

of infant mortality and chronic malnutrition, as well as high rates of maternal mortality and illiteracy. Moreover, important cultural barriers obstructed access to basic and reproductive health (RH) education, contributing to persistent vulnerability among children and women.

PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

In order to ensure equitable access to health care for women and children in Apurímac, the project implemented an integrated strategy aiming to (i) reduce the number of maternal and perinatal deaths; (ii) decrease the rate of chronic

malnutrition in children under three; (iii) improve access to quality health and nutrition services for mothers and children; and (iv) provide information about health, nutrition and hygiene to vulnerable women.

BENEFICIARIES

The primary beneficiaries were pregnant women, infants and young children in the provinces of Abancay and Aymaraes in Apurímac who obtained access to improved health-care services such as prenatal and antenatal care, obstetric emergency care and psycho-social counselling. In addition, local health workers benefited from

capacity-building trainings that allowed them to enhance the quality of service delivery in the health sector and parents benefited through awareness-raising on best practices in hygiene and the promotion of healthy environments for their children.