

The Old Dart Foundation Peru Funding Strategy

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Introduction

This document sets out the Old Dart Foundation's (ODF) funding strategy in Peru.

It reflects the actions we will take based on what we have heard and learned from an in-depth learning journey conducted in partnership with Ten Years' Time in 2018/19, as well as reflections and experiences in the years that have followed. Peru has faced multiple intersecting challenges since the original research took place, namely the covid-19 pandemic and associated lockdowns and a number of years of political, social and economic turbulence.

At the outset of this process, we were clear that we wanted to better understand the underlying causes and effects of the following thematic areas, which we understand to be some of the most pressing issues in Peru:

- Poor quality of rural education
- High rates of gender-based violence
- The impacts of climate change

Synthesising the insights from our experts and concluding what it means for our funding has been a huge privilege, yet also a challenging process. There is so much we can do in Peru and how best to strike a balance between breadth and depth of funding is something to which we continue to give careful consideration. This document details our funding priorities.

As well as giving consideration to *what* we fund, this process has also required us to give careful consideration to *how* we fund. In doing so, we have recognised we must significantly shift the power we hold to the communities we serve, in acknowledgement that they are in closer proximity to, and directly affected by the issues, and therefore best- placed to determine how our resources should be used.

As a spend-down foundation, it is a priority for us to play an integral role in strengthening civil society by mobilising other donors so that our grantees' work can continue as long as is needed and beyond our existence. This strategy includes the actions we will take to make this happen.

Francesca Mott, CEO, Old Dart Foundation



OUR VISION

A world in which Peru is able to flourish on its own terms, the diversity of its culture and ecosystems are valued and the potential of its people is fully realised.



OUR PURPOSE

We support our partners by developing trusting relationships, providing resources, and fostering connections, to advance inherent rights and catalyse systemic change.



OUR APPROACH

We provide long-term, flexible funding to organisations – [add more detail here](#)



OUR VALUES

Allyship

We know that the future of Peru belongs to the people who have been shaped by its past and present. As such, we are committed to working in service of people of Peru, and upholding their rights

Humility

We are committed to continual learning and growth. We seek out knowledge beyond our organisation and centre the expertise of those most affected by the injustices we seek to tackle.

Ambition

We recognise the urgency and seriousness of the injustices our partners seek to address. We are ambitious for the communities we serve and uncompromising in our commitment to this work. We are bold in the face of the action required of us.

Mutual respect

We seek to engage with our grantees in a spirit of partnership, mutual understanding and respect.

Humanity

Our mission is driven by compassion for the human race and the natural world.

Trust

We believe in our partners and are led by their vision; building authentic relationships based on solidarity.

Rural Education

Our research emphasised that:

- Early years education is a critical intervention point. There is a severe lack of provision and insufficient investment, especially in the rural setting
- In Primary settings, the main challenges are multi-grade teaching and a lack of bi-lingual education resources, which limit engagement from indigenous communities. Secondary level provision in rural areas is limited and many girls don't complete
- Teachers lack access to training and development opportunities and are poorly paid. It remains a challenge to retain teachers in the rural and remote areas. Weak school leadership is a huge challenge.
- There is somewhat of a 'swollen market' when it comes to higher education facilities in Peru, but they are concentrated in the urban areas. There is little regulation of higher education facilities and so quality cannot be assured.
- Many children never returned to school after the pandemic – [more info here](#)
- The political, economic and social instability has meant huge turnover of leadership and staff at the Ministry Level and poor implementation of new policies, which severely limits the ability of civil society to function and collaborate with the Ministry. Decentralization to the regional and local level is flawed, and there is low local capacity, especially in remote and border areas.
- There is very little provision for the transition between education and the work place – a real disconnect between educational offerings and the labor market. Life skills training and TVWT are low quality and lacking.

How ODF can catalyse change:

By providing funding and wider support towards:

- **Research and evidence in best practice** - Many of the challenges facing Peru exist across the world. Despite the benefits of learning from global best practice the education system remains insular in approach and may miss opportunities to develop more rapidly.
- **Promoting/Strengthening Early Child Development & Education (ECDE)** - The early years are the most important in a child's life but there is insufficient funding being allocated to early education. The majority of spending goes to later ages. This results in low quality and unequal access.
- **Strengthening Multi-Grade Teaching in Rural Areas** - Multi-grade schooling (where children of different ages share a class) is common in rural areas. However, teachers are not trained in appropriate teaching techniques as it is not allowed at secondary.

- **Improving School-to-Work Transitions** - While the economy in Peru is largely informal, the education system remains focused on academic courses. Technical and vocational education and life skills are undervalued, and career services are lacking
- **Professionalizing School Leadership** - School leaders have a huge impact on culture and performance in schools globally. In Peru they require no formal qualification and there is no mandatory or minimum training required: they are effectively experienced teachers removed from the classroom to become administrators.

In ten years' time:

Evidence-driven policy making has resulted in dramatic improvement in learning outcomes, especially in rural and remote areas of Peru

Gender-Based Violence

Our research emphasised that:

- There are several root causes of GBV in Peru, including patriarchal machismo cultural norms and the conservative influence of the church which are perpetuated by the media and politics
- For many families in Peru, there is widespread poverty and inequality and a lack of employment opportunities, insecure and informal work and a lack of empowerment.
- Intimate and familial violence is common, and families are often complicit
- Whilst there are laws to protect people from violence, these are poorly enforced.
- There are many examples of public violence with impunity and the Police and judiciary part of problem.
- GBV funding is usually focussed on victim support, rarely addressing the need to tackle the root causes by working with male perpetrators of violence.

How ODF can catalyse change:

By providing funding and wider support for:

- **Progressive Social Movements** - The many social movements which exist and have been vital in pushing the agenda for gender equality, but lack the resources needed to be fully effective. ODF is uniquely placed to support those which have traditionally been at the margins of mainstream movements to have their voices heard
- **Behaviour Change Approaches / Challenging Social Norms:** Violence against women is a social and cultural problem in Peru. It is part of a broader challenge of how women are viewed in society and the relationship between the family and the state.
- **Research and Evidence on what works in ending Violence Against Women:** Part of the problem with tackling violence, and advocating for greater funding, is a lack of reliable data. This includes from government sources. As a result there is insufficient funding being allocated to prevention.
- **Reducing Adolescent Pregnancy** - Adolescent pregnancy is high in rural areas, especially in jungle regions of Peru. Adolescent pregnancy stops a young girl's education and creates intergenerational cycles of poverty.
- **Approaches which Target Perpetrators:** too much work focuses on supporting victims of violence. ODF should invest in innovations which work with perpetrators, exploring root causes.

In ten years' time:

We hope that behaviours, social norms and public discourse around gender-based violence change in Peru and that rights and protection from violence will be the status quo in law, in reality and in social consciousness, for all Peruvians.

Climate

Our research emphasised that:

- Indigenous people have developed cultures, practices, livelihoods and institutions that prevent the over-exploitation of forests. Consequently, rates of deforestation and biodiversity loss are significantly lower in areas managed by local communities.
- Protecting local people's livelihoods can be a key lever for preventing deforestation because communities are less likely to be living in precarious financial circumstances that lead to them selling their land to logging/extractive companies.
- Despite the above, there have not been any significant shifts in policies or in financial support from funders for indigenous communities.
- Historically, less than 2% of philanthropy has gone to climate change initiatives and less than 1% of that has gone to indigenous and frontline communities, even though they are bearing the impact of climate change.

How ODF can catalyse change:

By providing:

- Direct funding and wider support to indigenous communities, climate leaders and activists
- Funding which supports the development of indigenous community-led initiatives, or organizations which are led-by and represent the interests of, indigenous communities
- Funding that enables the local management of forests and prioritises self-determination of indigenous peoples

In ten years' time:

We hope that inherent land rights for indigenous peoples are formalised and respected, improving environmental outcomes and strengthening community leadership and livelihoods

Our funding practices

Our research emphasised that:

- *How* we provide funding is just as, if not more important than, *what* we fund.
- Although much of what we are already doing is helpful for grantees, such as the provision of core, unrestricted funding, there is still so much more we can do to shift the power to those who are in proximity to, and directly affected by the issues. They are best placed to determine what their country needs.
- As a private funder, we are uniquely placed to help those who are in most need of support but so often underfunded.

How ODF will fund going forward:

1. Our grants: We will...

- Continue to offer unrestricted funding.
- Continue to offer core funding.
- Actively support each of our grantees to find donors that can support them beyond ODF's lifetime, so their work can continue as long as it is needed.

2. Non-financial support: We will...

- Actively help strengthen our grantees' organisations if they need this support (for example through mentoring, education and capacity building).
- Continue to communicate in ways that work for our grantees.
- Continue to invest in organisations themselves, not just projects.

3. Our funding process: We will...

- We will seek specialist support and guidance to help us shine a spotlight on the ways in which our current ways of working may inadvertently be reinforcing harm.
- Be transparent about the origins of ODF's wealth.
- Build due diligence into our governance, compliance and grant-making processes
- Support grantees to define success on their own terms, instead of imposing our own monitoring processes

4. Our power: We will actively shift the power to the communities we serve by:

- Proactively seeking out local changemaking organisations and supporting them in realising their own visions.
- Building a robust Peruvian team and truly localizing our Peru work
- Increasing the amount of funding handled by local communities

5. Our role in the wider funding ecosystem: We will...

- Coordinate with other funders.
- Fund the eco-system and support it to grow.
- Talk to other funders about shifting the power.
- Do donor organising – promoting our grantees to other funders.