

## **La Casa de Panchita**

Asociación Grupo de Trabajo Redes (AGTR)

### **Why La Casa de Panchita?**

Half a million females work cleaning, cooking and taking care of children in private homes in Peru. Most come to Lima from rural poverty or shantytowns. Hidden from view, the vast majority do not enjoy such basic rights as schooling, a work week of only six days and minimum wage. Girls as young as 9 years old regularly cook and clean to earn a meal and care for the children of other families, instead of going to school themselves. Women and girls suffer abuse and entrapment. We enable these women to stand up for their rights and negotiate better jobs and give these girls a chance to reclaim their childhood.

La Casa de Panchita has fought to protect the rights and improve the conditions of children and adults in domestic work for twenty-five years. We are helping break through a legacy of poverty and servitude passed from mother to daughter because of lack of opportunity and education. As they gain skills, confidence and understanding of their rights, the girls and women we serve pursue more education and secure better jobs.

Our purpose is to encourage families to remove their children from domestic labor, protect children and women from abuse and exploitation, develop the personal and occupational skills of those working in domestic service and enable them to negotiate better employment conditions, with recognition of their rights.

Over the last ten years we provided direct service to 44,000 girls and 31,000 women, education, media campaigns, grassroots outreach to families, access to basic healthcare and legal services, national policy work, and operated a mission-driven employment agency that helps domestic workers who are trained and legally old enough to work to find situations in which their rights and dignity will be respected.

Over the next decade we will build on our many successes, continue to innovate and expand our services, grow our model of former domestic workers teaching other domestic workers and children at risk of entering domestic work at an early age and continue to work with allies across Lima, Peru and the world to reduce the risk that young girls will enter domestic work and ensure that the rights and dignity of domestic workers are recognized in law, policy and popular culture.

### **Our history**

The Asociación Grupo de Trabajo Redes (AGTR), founded in 1989 in Lima, Peru, is a non-governmental organization inscribed in the Public Registry of Lima with the record 10555.

Our mission is to promote the engagement in the domestic work sector only by those who are of legal age to work, as well as advocating that it is performed with efficiency and respecting employees' rights.

La Casa de Panchita was created in 1998 at the request of domestic workers as AGTR's base of operations, a space for socialization, education, protection and the dissemination of human and civil rights of children, adolescents and adults engaged in domestic work.

La Casa de Panchita's team is quite remarkable and has been key to making effective connections with the clients we serve. Our team, including our leadership, is comprised of former children and women domestic workers, professionals, students, national and international volunteers, men and women ranging from adolescents to seniors. For instance, girls who were formerly employed as child domestic workers, and first came to La Casa de Panchita a decade ago, today have created five groups of young outreach workers who provide services to child domestic workers in Lima, Callao and Cajamarca, while also pursuing secondary studies. These young women are setting an example in their communities.

### **Awards**

In recent years, AGTR has received three major awards for its work. In March 2013, the Municipality of Lima awarded La Casa de Panchita with the Lima Warmi Award, in recognition of its outstanding defense of the rights of domestic workers. The Ministry of Women and Social Development (MIMDES) awarded Blanca Figueroa, President of the Executive Board, the Order of Merit Award for Women 2010. The Center for the Promotion and Defense of Human Rights (CEPRODEH) gave Sofia Mauricio, coordinator of La Casa de Panchita, the 2010 Human Rights Medal.

### **Programs**

Each Sunday La Casa de Panchita opens its doors to girls age 9-13 from the poor district of San Juan de Miraflores (Lima ) who spend the other six days a week in low or unpaid domestic work. Through playful activities, these girls are made aware of their status as child domestic workers (not simply "helpers who should be grateful for food and shelter"), the risks their work entails and their rights as children. We also encourage them to stay in or return to school if they are able and we help them with their homework.

La Casa de Panchita urges parents and teachers to be protective of their children and students in child domestic work, given that the eradication of child domestic work in Peru is not possible due to the persisting high poverty rates. In schools in San Juan de Miraflores, as well as in night schools in various districts of Lima, we identify and provide services to children and adolescents in child domestic work in collaboration with principals and teachers. Our initiatives include: workshops on child domestic work, phone calls to family in the provinces, setting up classroom libraries, psychological counseling and recreational and cultural fieldtrips. Activities with children in child domestic work are sponsored by various donors and carried out with the contribution of volunteer work. The greatest part of our funding has arrived from Anti-Slavery International (UK), Unioni (Finland), Cordaid (Netherlands), Terre de Hommes (Basel, the Netherlands and Luxembourg).

At La Casa de Panchita, since 2007, an employment agency has provided free services to adult women seeking to work in domestic service after having attended a three-day training. This additional training and certification gives its graduates a better shot at securing a position through the agency which is formalized with a written contract which follows Peruvian law regarding hours, time off and other rights. The Nonprofit Enterprise and Self-sustainability Team (NESsT), has supported our agency since 2010, helping it design and develop its business plan.

La Casa de Panchita has a radio-recording booth and, since two years ago, has been releasing the weekly radio program "We are not invisible". It is the only program in Peru that addresses both

child domestic work and domestic work among adults. According to ratings performed by Union La Radio, where it is aired, the program has about 18,000 listeners. Adult and child domestic workers, as well as government officials and political personalities take part in this initiative. Complementary dissemination activities include easily accessible online and printed publications about studies and methodological approaches developed by AGTR.

Advocacy is mainly carried out through participation in the National Committee for the Prevention and Eradication of Child Labor (CPETI) and the Bureau of Domestic Workers, both led by Peru's Ministry of Labor. AGTR's participation is very important to ensure that domestic work of children and women stays at the top of the agenda.

### **The scale of our impact**

Children and adolescents in child domestic labor: 27,007 have been assisted at La Casa de Panchita and in the communities where the five outreach teams of former child domestic worker are active; 17,474 have been assisted in educational institutions.

In addition, 5,505 children and adolescents have been contacted and informed of their rights.

Domestic workers: 4,407 received job training; 2,640 obtained a written labor contract with improved working conditions and the full recognition of their rights under the law; 24,028 received various services at La Casa de Panchita or educational institutions.

In addition, 37,450 have received information about their rights.

Families of children and adolescents in child domestic work: 1,678 families received home visits and support to educate and encourage them to offer greater protection to their children who are in child domestic work.

Teachers of children and adolescents in child domestic work: 1,532 teachers in Lima, Ayacucho and Cajamarca received guidance and support to encourage the identification and greater protection of students in child domestic work.

### **Our challenge**

The Casa de Panchita is not only a physical space where girls and women are safe, protected and able to develop their skills and self-esteem, it is also a symbol of hope for thousands of women throughout Peru who hear about the famous casa through the radio program, educational materials and social media.

In September 1998, La Casa de Panchita was a simple rented room 35m<sup>2</sup> in size. Three years later we rented a house of 200m<sup>2</sup> to expand our services to children and adolescents in domestic labor. Then, in 2005, we rented the current venue of 530m<sup>2</sup>, located in the Republic of Chile Avenue, numbers 566, 558, 548 and 540 (District of Jesus Maria - Lima). This venue, with more than eleven rooms, fitted with the necessary equipment, allows us to offer diverse workshops and services, particularly on Sundays, the only day off for almost all domestic workers. Located between three major avenues that intersect the capital, a couple of blocks away from the Ministry of Labor, close to parks and museums and with good links to transportation, La Casa de Panchita is situated in an ideal location to reach girls and women from outlying areas of the city.

In December 2014, the owner of the premises that houses La Casa de Panchita sent a notarized letter offering its sale at the end of our current lease, in mid-July 2015. The market price of this 530 square meters is \$ 1.5 million. As a result of an excellent relationship with the owner, who has appreciated our work for nearly ten years, the offer, for us only, has been lowered to \$450,000. This generous gesture is a great achievement by our nonprofit and is recognition of the importance of our work. However, raising that amount of money remains a major challenge and we have a limited time to meeting our goal.

### **Our plan**

The purchase of the property that everyone identifies as La Casa de Panchita represents a great opportunity to further our mission to benefit the community. This space is essential for us to continue organizing the Sunday sessions for girls in child domestic work and adult workers, to offer trainings and education of all types to provide the services of La Casa de Panchita, SAC, our employment agency, to keep broadcasting the radio program WE ARE NOT INVISIBLE, an important and unique tool for social advocacy and to continue to develop innovative new programs.

The building offered to La Casa de Panchita also contains two additional spaces licensed for use for commercial purposes which could house businesses that benefited domestic workers as well as generating additional income for the organization. They could also be adapted to function as a short-term shelter for La Casa de Panchita clients in specific situations.

### **Our campaign**

To reach the \$ 450,000 target, La Casa de Panchita is launching a special fundraising campaign from January 20 through June 30th, 2015, when the purchase must be finalized. The goal of the campaign is to generate a network of friends and allies to help us raise the maximum amount of funds to purchase “our home” so that future generations of girls and women receive the encouragement, education and support they need to be able to achieve a better life for themselves and their families.

It is our intention to pay the full cost of the property through a combination of grants, subsidies and possibly a mortgage on the property.

We have two main channels for receiving donations:

- Online, via the VISA NET system on our website ([www.agtr.org.pe/apoyanos](http://www.agtr.org.pe/apoyanos)), with Visa debit or credit card;
- Via bank transfer to one of our accounts at Banco de Credito del Peru, Home Office, Miraflores – Avenida Larco and Schell, Lima 18, Peru (SWIFT: BCPLPEPL):
  - Savings account in USD:  
Account holder: AGTR-LA CASA DE PANCHITA  
Account Number: 194-15122467-118
  - Savings account at Nuevos Soles (PEN):  
Account holder: AGTR-LA CASA DE PANCHITA  
Account Number: 194-30987590-0-93

### **Giving and Recognition Opportunities**

There will be naming opportunities for the library, the patio, the kitchen and other spaces for friends of the Casa de Panchita who are in the position to make particularly sizeable contributions to our permanent home. After reaching the target and purchasing the property, a nameplate will be permanently exhibited at La Casa de Panchita, with the names of every individual or entity that contributed to this effort, no matter the size of the gift. From February 2015, a monthly report of the donations received will be available.

### **From the Team**

The success of this fundraising campaign is essential for continuing the mission that La Casa de Panchita has set as its contribution to improving human and labor rights of girls, adolescents and women who work in domestic service in Peru.

All of us at AGTR and La Casa de Panchita thank our friends and partners who have made pursuing our mission possible during the past 25 years. We truly value and rely on your support.

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