

How does AGUAPAN allocate HZPC's funds?

AGUAPAN, the Association of Guardians of Native Potato Varieties from Central Peru, was established on 10 July 2014 and currently has a membership of 50 small growers from different communities. The members are poor growers from the highlands that are recognised as the 'guardians' of native varieties; each family grows approximately 50 to 500 native varieties.

The establishment of AGUAPAN prompted much discussion among the members about how HZPC's financial support, provided as recognition of the crucial role that small growers play in the Andes in preserving the biodiversity, should be used. The members of AGUAPAN decided that each family may decide at their own discretion.

We recently visited 33 grower families and asked them how they use the funds that are allocated via AGUAPAN. During those visits, it transpired that the growers use the funds in a variety of ways. A number of them said that they used part of the funds to invest in their potato crop, or spent it on their families' education or health. However, the funds are mainly used for purchasing manure (cow, sheep and lama manure), seed potatoes, school uniforms or school materials and medical consultations. These investments clearly contribute to improving the production of potato varieties and access to education and health care (see table, page 19).

We also talked to three female growers about their experiences with AGUAPAN and HZPC's support.

Alda Chavez Callupe comes from the Bellavista community (Pasco region) and is the mother of a 9 year old daughter. Alda says: "I want my daughter to get a good job. It's no life being a grower, you sacrifice yourself, and sometimes that sacrifice is for nothing, because the price of potatoes is low. I want more for my daughter." She affirms: "The 853 Peruvian

Sol that I received via AGUAPAN makes a difference, I used the money to buy sheep manure fertilizer and to pay my daughter's school fees." Alda grows 60 different native potato varieties and participates in the agricultural biodiversity exhibition in Paucartambo every year on 24 June, the National Grower Day in Peru.



Alda Chavez Callupe



Berta Naupai Ponce



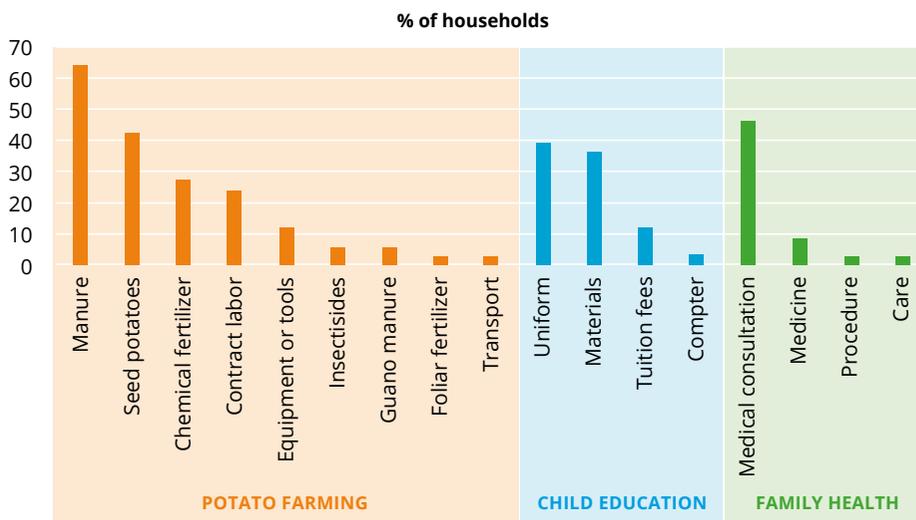
Association of guardians of native potatoes from central Peru (Huáncο, 16-17 juni 2016)

Aurea Eulalia Mendoza Capcha is a 29-year old grower from the La Quinoa community in the Pasco region. "Every year, each member in my community is given half a hectare of communal land. I work one hectare of 60 different native potato varieties together with my father. A few years ago the surface area of the communal agricultural land became smaller, because most of the people work in mining and bought their potatoes on the market. My AGUAPAN membership has helped me, because I have learned to appreciate what I have. I cherish and admire my potatoes much more now. I used the funds I received via AGUAPAN to pay for season workers for ploughing, planting and transporting the harvested potatoes to my house by donkey.

Berta Naupai Ponce, 37 years of age, lives with her husband and three sons in the Santa Rosa de Monte Azul community in the Huánuco region. One of her sons is 14 years old and attending secondary school. The youngest is 6 and goes to primary school and the eldest is 17 and has just started his studies in mechanical engineering. The family used the funds that they received from HZPC and their own savings to pay the college fees. Berta says: "I really want my sons to find a good job and not have to lead

the hard life of growers. When we got married we grew 45 different native potato varieties, but we have increased the number of varieties to more than 200 over the years. I hope that my AGUAPAN membership enables me to allow my sons to study. AGUAPAN has made me realise that other people also appreciate our native potatoes."

During the AGUAPAN annual meeting, the allocation of the HZPC donation is evaluated and determined again for the coming year. The annual meeting 2016 was held on 16 and 17 June 2016 in Huánuco.



Use of funds for the production of native potato varieties, children's education and health care.