

REPORT TO THE FUNDING NETWORK
By the TReeS (Tambopata Reserve Society)

29 June 2004

Prepared by: Helen Newing (TReeS Treasurer)
H.S.Newing@kent.ac.uk, University of Kent, Canterbury CT2 7NS,
01227 827034 / 731351

One paragraph summary of the project's progress:

The money donated by the Funding Network has allowed TReeS Peru to refurbish the office and update office equipment; to improve communications between members of the governing committee; and to produce the first newsletter of TReeS Peru, which is designed as a fund-raising tool aimed principally at tourists visiting the region. As a result of improved coordination made possible by Funding Network funds for in-country flights. The Peru committee has expanded and is currently preparing two major funding proposals (one to the Darwin Initiative UK and one to FONDAM, the Fund for the Americas). Small funds have also been used for specific activities, including a press launch for a new book on indigenous remedies and a map and video documenting the Ese'Eja people's traditional territory, which they will be able to use to safeguard their access to land and resources. We will better be able to evaluate the full impact of the funding at the end of 2004, when the newsletter will have been in circulation for the tourism high season, and the rest of the office equipment will be in place. Some items of expenditure – notably the purchase of computer equipment – are still pending, while we await the procession of institutional papers by various government offices in line with new legislation.

General comments:

Our original request to the Funding Network was for £5,180, in order to boost the organisational capacity of our sister organisation in Peru and also set up a 'catalyst grants programme' – a (very) small funding system for local projects. We were awarded £3,780, and decided to prioritise organisational capacity.

The granting of money by the Funding Network created a feeling of urgency within TReeS Peru to consolidate its institutional footing and launch a comprehensive fundraising strategy, headed by a newsletter. I was able to meet with TReeS Peru committee members and spend some two weeks at the office over Christmas / New year, and we reviewed the budget and drew up a plan of action. The newsletter is now in circulation. Other activities have advanced a certain way but we feel we are not yet at a point to show the full effects of the grant, largely because most of the year was taken up in grappling with new legislative requirements in Peru for the bureaucratic regulation of non-governmental organisations.

Peru has recently passed new laws stipulating lengthy bureaucratic processes for the financial and organisational management of non-governmental organisations. This made it necessary to open a new bank account and go through several new legal processes of registration with different government offices. We decided to delay transferring the majority of the funds until this was done. The bank account was finally opened in February but the last stages of the legal process to make it fully operational are still under way. Thus, whilst the newsletter and organisational aspects have advanced with Funding Network funding, the major items of expenditure (the computer and some other items of office equipment) are still to be purchased.

If you'd like further details on this now, please let me know. Otherwise we would like to give you a further report in six months' time. We will then also be in a position to evaluate the success of the newsletter as a fundraising tool, as by then it will have been in circulation for a full tourism high season.

Meanwhile we hope you are pleased with what we have done, and would like to take this opportunity to express our thanks to Funding Network members. Your donation was a significant amount for an organisation as small as TReeS, and it has allowed us to do several things we have wanted to do for years. In particular, the new newsletter should bring in a regular source of funding that will allow us to build TReeS Peru's office into an established centre for advice, information and funding for local struggles in the field of human rights, community development and environmental education.

We do also want to say something about the projects TReeS has been supporting. During 2003 TReeS supported a total of 19 projects as well as acting as an information centre for local students, professionals and community leaders. The projects included the preparation of a major report on indigenous rights and timber and gold extraction for the state ombudsman's office; continued support for the regional Federation for Native Communities, including for their campaign in defence of uncontacted indigenous communities; and a range of projects in education and environmental research. A full list, with brief descriptions, is attached, and more details of many projects are given in TReeS Peru's first newsletter. Funding network money has allowed us to give small honoraria to five people to carry out small but regular tasks for TReeS Peru in order to ensure that the basic infrastructure grows to meet the growing demand on the time of our volunteers.

How we spent the grant:

On office refurbishment and equipment, production of a newsletter and promotional leaflet, travel within Peru for coordination of the management committee, and some small project funds. See attached table for details.

What results we have achieved:

1. Repair and refurbishment of office
2. Production of first newsletter by TReeS Peru and end to end process review to inform production of further issues.
3. Establishment of newsletter distribution system. The newsletter has been distributed in cafes, shops and hotels in the local town of Puerto Maldonado; at tourist attractions, boat ports and the airport. It is distributed by volunteers and local tourism students. A system has been developed to evaluate which outlets are most successful so that distribution can be modified and improved for the next issue.
4. Preparation of text for new TReeS Peru leaflet for distribution to tourists. Artwork is currently under way.
5. Coordination visit by Helen Newing of TReeS UK in December / January led to major planning review and set-up the newsletter production team
6. Increased face-to-face coordination by the TReeS Peru committee has led to the preparation of two major funding proposals

Additional planned activities with Funding Network grant:

1. Purchase of new office equipment (computer and accessories, printer/scanner/fax)
2. Establishment of small library in TReeS Peru office. We have budgeted with the Funding Network grant to buy two glass-fronted lockable bookcases, and to pay two students to spend one month putting all public documents onto a database designed by other environmental organisations in Puerto Maldonado.

Media coverage:

There has been no specific media coverage of the activities described above, as they are mostly to do with institutional and administrative matters.