



## Virgen de Fatima Community, Peru

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The 171 residents of the Virgen de Fatima community in central Peru struggled against a pervasive water crisis. The remote community had no access to safe water, relying completely on an offshoot of the Ucayali River for their water supply. For decades, the residents depended on the river to provide enough water for their daily needs, including drinking, cooking, and cleaning. Every day the community's women and children were tasked with gathering water, carrying heavy containers to and from the riverbanks. Not only did this physically strain their muscles, but the route was dangerous—shrubs grew in thick patches on the river's edge, creating prime spaces for venomous snakes, leeches, and crocodiles to hide.

Without a safe water source, the Virgen de Fatima community fell ill to the waterborne diseases that infested the river. The slow-moving, murky water was teeming with invisible bacteria that brought sicknesses like cholera, typhoid, and diarrhea to the community. The local children were especially susceptible waterborne illnesses, as their immune systems weren't fully developed. What's more, many of the children in the community couldn't swim, making collecting water from the river even more perilous.



Three women gather water from the nearby river.



Residents celebrate the new safe water well!

**“The quality of the river water is not good because it contains dirt and other contaminants. The most dangerous aspect of collecting water from this river is electric eels tucked under the aquatic plants. My son almost drowned because of a crocodile.”**

**—Armando Ruiz Panduro, 75-year-old fisherman**

When the residents heard about Living Water's work in a neighboring community, they quickly reached out to request help. The staff visited Virgen de Fatima and listened to the community members' stories of the water crisis. The Living Water team surveyed the area and determined a new well could be constructed! Now, residents have access to plentiful safe water in the middle of their community.

Safe water has changed every aspect of life in the Virgen de Fatima community! The new well has made it possible for the residents to collect water without fearing for their health or safety. Now, members of the community no longer have to worry about wild animals lurking near their water source. With safe water flowing, the residents can begin to heal from the effects of waterborne illness, which means they can devote their time and money to their families and jobs. What's more, the new well will stand as a tangible reminder of God's protection for his people.

**Armando is grateful that his grandchildren will experience a life without the hardships of the water crisis. He said, "The new water source will change our lives. More than anything, this new well will greatly impact the next generation. We will always be grateful for this help!"**



Children play in the water after the construction team successfully reaches an underground aquifer!