Dear Friends of Amazon Promise!

I have just returned from the first jungle medical clinics of 2015! What an exhausting yet successful trip, thanks to our volunteers representing the University of Michigan, Penn State, Einstein, and the University of Winnipeg! As always, our Peru staff did an incredible job and carried us safely to and from the jungle without incident! During ten clinics in both the city of Iquitos and remote jungle communities, we attended to 1,324 people. This is our 22nd year of remote medical relief, and I’m proud to say we’re stronger than ever. I’m excited to tell you about what we’re up to right now!

Our work doesn’t end when the last medical volunteer gets on a plane to go home. We are in constant action throughout the year with on-going projects, receiving patients in need of follow-up care; helping new patients that come to our door desperately in need of medical aid and accompanying them to the hospitals as their patient advocate; never-ending daily administrative duties; and working with our health educators and our partner organizations. We are always looking for new partners and new ways to reach more people in need.

Last week, Amazon Promise, along with Toilets for People (http://www.toiletsforpeople.com/), installed three more low-cost composting toilets in houses located near our Belen Clinic. The first toilets were installed in November, and all are running well. Just look at these photos below to see how lives are being changed every day. We envision the total disappearance of the outhouses in Belen, and this is the way to do it! We are so proud of this project! Need I say more?

From filthy, dangerous, and humiliating outhouses........

Emilio and Mia Rubi now have their own private toilet, urinal, and hand washing station! Before today, their father, Zaid had to carry his children to the outhouse to prevent them from falling off the elevated walkway into the open sewage below.

← Hand washing station installed!

→ Dr. Abe Kanal, Jason Kass, and Daniel delivering a toilet!
Coming up!

This week, we’ll be finishing up with the first patients in our ‘Screen and Treat 500 Women for Cervical Cancer’ campaign. **Cervical Cancer is the number one cancer diagnosis in Peru**, yet women living in the city of Iquitos and remote jungle villages have little to no access to screening, and almost zero access to treatment. **Through our campaign, we’re changing that!** Of the first 52 women screened in our clinics held in impoverished neighborhoods on the outskirts of Iquitos, 13 had abnormal cells requiring cryotherapy treatment. An alarmingly high percentage, but we are thankful to have identified them. Of the 72 women tested in jungle communities, just two women were identified. Many women are still hesitant to be tested, but through further education and one-on-one counseling, we are confident we will be able to change minds and save more women’s lives.

**Engineers Without Borders** (Sonoma County Professional Chapter) will return to Peru in June to work with Amazon Promise to inspect the two rainwater catchment systems installed in the villages of Jerusalen and Jaldar last year. We will also start work to install more rainwater systems in other villages of the Yarapa and lower Ucayali Rivers that have requested them. We have seen the incredible success of these clean water systems and know that rainwater is the way to go for clean drinking water in the Amazon! Both Jaldar and Jerusalen are showing lower rates of diarrheal disease, and to top it off, are now selling their water to other villages and tourist lodges. Because they have been successful in maintaining their water systems, they are both on the list to receive the low-cost composting toilets mentioned above.
Each day, I am driven by the belief that every life is important and that everyone has the right to health and happiness. Seeing a person carried into one of our clinics, and then walking out after receiving good treatment, or seeing a project from beginning to end such as rainwater catchment systems and clean composting toilets, is like no other feeling in the world. You know you’ve done your job.

I look forward to keeping you posted on our work in the months to come!

Patty Webster
President, Amazon Promise

P.S. Please consider making a gift and invest in a healthier Peru. You can give through our website at http://amazonpromise.org/index.php/donate or send a contribution to P.O. Box 1304, Newburyport, MA, 01950. Thank you!