Every weekday morning, 120 elementary school children fill the dining hall at the Help the Children Association School to eat a warm breakfast. While each child has a different story, the children have one thing in common – they all come from an area of extreme poverty in and around the ancient Incan capital city of Cusco, Peru. The school, known locally as Huch‘uy Runa, began 31 years ago to meet the basic needs of the children in Cusco. In Quechua, “huch‘uy” means little and “runa” means a well-rounded person who contributes to the well-being of the community. The two words combined, “huch‘uy runa” mean “little important person.” And the children of this city carry this identity with pride. The school, with support from ELCA World Hunger, has been able to change the lives of many “little important person(s)” and their families for more than a decade. Through your gifts, the children of this city receive a primary education, meals and snacks, and training in trade skills that include carpentry, metalwork, pottery and weaving – skills they can use to support themselves and their families in the future. Thanks to your support, the children in Peru are gaining lifelong skills. As one teacher shares, “[it] is like a family trying to equip the children to be able to survive and succeed in life, hoping to build a solid base on which they can stand.”

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Harvesting hope

NICARAGUA

ELCA.org/hunger

Each season, Zulema Lopez sows and reaps crops in the village of San Luis, near Somoto in northern Nicaragua. But after years of prolonged drought, wells have run dry and many harvests have failed. “Everything has dried up – the fields, the wells, the rivers. It’s all dry now,” Lopez said. “Lots of women have a negative perception – that they can’t do anything.”

Carmen* first came to the Young Leaders program in August of 2016. She was quiet and shy. The confidence she gained, though, encouraged her to use her talents to become a leader among her peers. In time, Carmen developed her creative writing skills and became co-editor of The Phoenix of Phillips, the program’s literary magazine. Her talents and leadership skills led to a scholarship offer from one of the premier private high schools in the area. St. Paul’s Young Leaders program is helping change the community by accompanying youth who will – and are – making a difference. “A lot of people have a negative view of youth as troublemakers,” says Pastor Hansel. “But here, the youth get to see a community of Christians that cares about them, and the community can see their leadership and responsibility at work.”

*Name changed for privacy

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Reproductive Stories 2017

Use these stories in your Sunday bulletins, newsletters and other communications to highlight how your work made possible by gifts to ELCA World Hunger and Lutheran Disaster Response. Visit ELCA.org/hunger/resources for these and additional stories. Reproduce the piece below on the back of your favorite story or offering plate or mail it to:

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[Image 130x476 to 207x541]

[Image 603x467 to 774x593]