

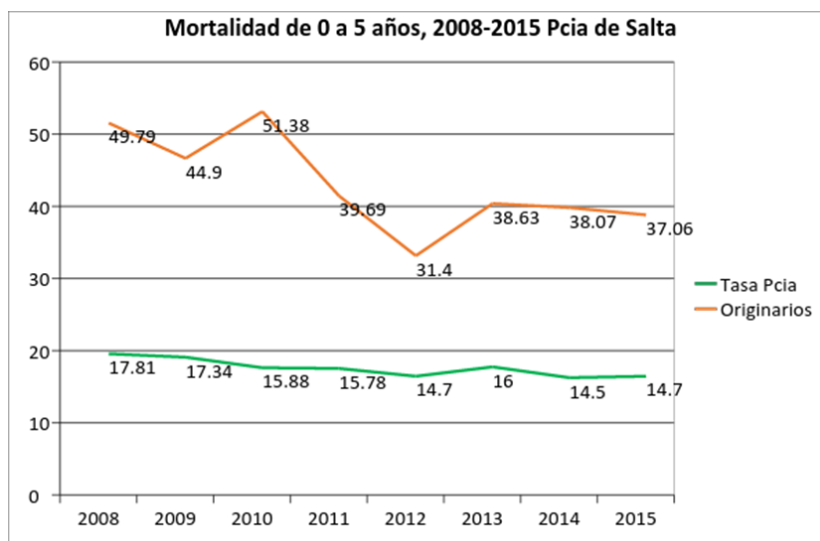


## THE "YACHUYAJ WO" GARDEN PROJECT

### REPORT JUNE-JULY 2018



**Pastor Carlos Campos with fruit in son in law's garden at far away Pagé.**

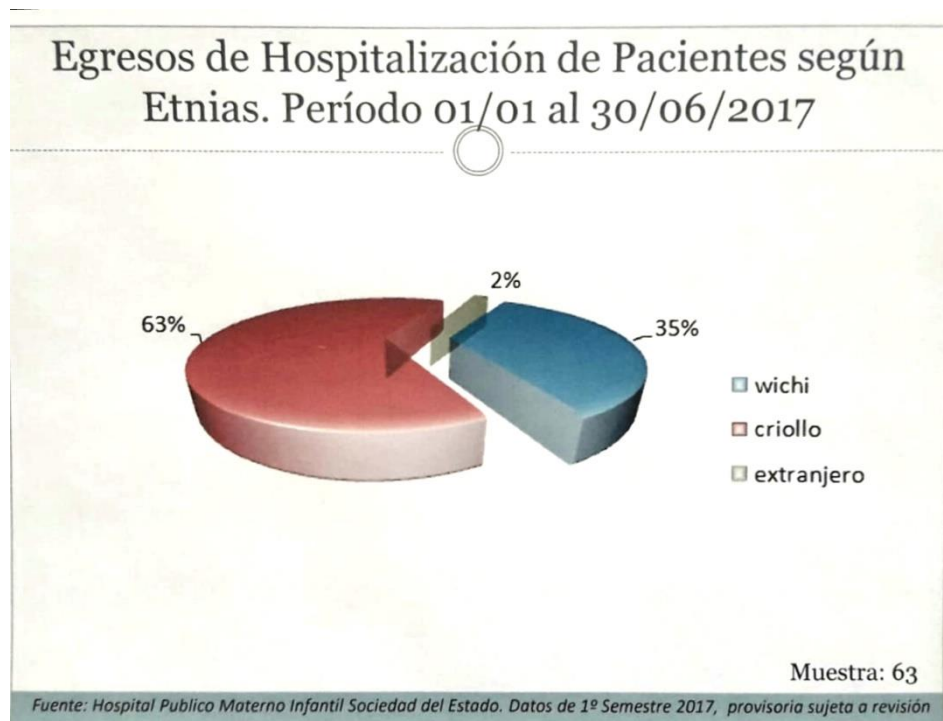


Much of my time these last months have been devoted to sharing the unacceptable inequities of the Wichi people when you compare them to the criollo or general population. In every area of life (health, education, access to work, etc) the differences are notorious.

	Total Salta	Total Pueblos Originarios de Salta	Pueblos originarios de Zona Norte	Población originaria Departamento Rivadavia
Tasa de Natalidad x 1000	21.6 (1)	29 (3)	31 (3)	<b>32 (3)</b>
Tasa de Mortalidad Infantil x1000	11.3 (2)	25.58 (3)	26.2 (3)	<b>24.9 (3)</b>
Tasa mortalidad < 5 años x 1000	14.7(3)	37.06 (3)	39.11 (3)	<b>53.4 (3)</b>
Tasa de Mortalidad Materna x 10000	8.1 (1)	19.67 (3)	24.19 (3)	<b>71.17 (3)<sup>1</sup></b>

As you can see above the worst data (<5 years) is when the mother weans the first baby thus not passing on her own good defenses plus drinking bad water, wrong nutrition. etc.

The strawberry of the cake came two days ago when I went to interview the head nutrition doctor in the new Hospital Materno Infantil. While I was waiting for him I saw on a wall these charts that show from where malnourished babies come from and in this case at right is the indian or not. Wichi are 3% of Salta population but 35% of the patients in the malnutrition sector of the hospital are Wichi. Something smells rotten...



<sup>1</sup> Por tratarse de una población pequeña, el indicador es lábil.



As I mentioned at the beginning, much of my time has been spent trying to show these inequities. Some others:

Exams in maths and language show that 100% of kids in Misión Chaqueña and Alto de la Sierra (all Wichi student population) are in the lowest group of results. The average for the country is 16% in the highest group. 54% in the middle and 30 in the lowest group. On my travels I confirm this as nobody know the square root of 16, a big river in Brazil or what is a protein...

6% of Wichi women have had the PAP test done while there is an average of 60% for the country.

In 2016 from 60 deaths of children (0 to 5 years) 39 come from indian families.

And we could go on with the same differences in all aspects of life... I learned that the Vice President was going to Jujuy 2 weeks ago and there I went, not invited! Remembering that in Jesus's time, friends of a sick man lowered him through the roof so that the Master could attend to the man I was able to overcome my shyness and knock on the door of the meeting room saying that I had something to tell the VP. I must have been very decided because they let me in and she was very attentive asking me to give all the data (which I had prepared for the occasion) to her secretary. We'll see if there are any fruits from this meeting.

Where there are fruits to see is in many Wichi gardens at this moment before the frosts come. Our Garden Godparent initiative has been positive with more than 40 gardens being done. Some better than others but all good experience for the people.







We're producing good food and income in 13 communities.

Here Morillo, Fiscal and Salim.







Some new options of production that can be sold in the criollo communities nearby.



It is clear that in many of these labour intensive crops we need to learn more.



We have taken an INTA (government rural extension worker) to teach about these difficult crops.

They have good intentions but don't even have fuel to move their trucks! So I have to look for the man and take him back but his knowledge is much needed if we



want to carry on doing these winter crops. We are planning to write the technical data of tomato production in Wichi language as we did with the maize and INTA will have to participate.



Some of the gardeners are part of our craftsmen team with whom we worked so many years before, as Jorge Diaz here at left. Having water at ground level is a real blessing for all communities on the northern bank of the Bermejo river, especially near Mission Chaqueña folk. Many gardens are irrigated with water from wells we have recently

dug. With less forest resources agriculture will definitely have to play a more important role in the future and ground water is strategic to this end.

Last year our project to buy a mechanical drill for wells that are beyond the depth of hand drilling tools was approved and now we have a very good quality drill imported from Brazil. A church from Buenos Aires donated an old truck and we have bolted it now on the truck. Also we have had approved another project funded by a seed firm that will provide tools and the trailer where the workers will sleep.





With this machine we can get to over 200mts depth. More than enough for the Chaco region. Jose Cika, now a Pastor, has worked many years in the social programs of the Church and will now operate this perforation drill. There is much to do in access to water themes.

### Crafts and Wichi painting

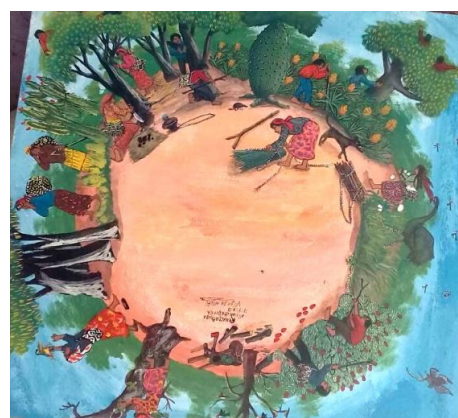


There is a healthy connection between crafts and the family agriculture that we are promoting. The man can be making his easy short term income generator (crafts) while also attending to his longer term income and food generator (garden).

Siwok Crafts UK is closing shop, but Phil and Rosemary Tadman have picked the glove up and are continuing with this useful service of offering the products of the Wichi to other outlets in the UK. You can contact them at:

[sales@siwok.org.uk](mailto:sales@siwok.org.uk) or see the website [www.siwok.org.uk](http://www.siwok.org.uk)

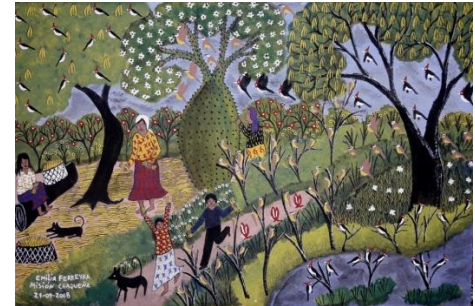
The Painting project is now over 20 years old, still alive and self-sufficient. My job is to look for outlets, take materials for the job and also pass on ideas that buyers tell me. This family of painters can earn a living by documenting their ancient way of surviving in the forest while at the same time earning needed income.





We have recently sent pictures to Finland by DHL and could do the same with anyone interested.

Each painting is around USD30 each depending on the size.



### Future of our work

Our 2 year project with the government that had to finish in November has been shortened and will finish at the end of July. I have presented a new proposal that is being studied in some official's office in Buenos Aires, far from the Chaco.

The country, once again! is in a very difficult situation with the peso being devalued daily which fuels inflation. Technicians say the problem is that we spend more than comes in, so there will be a necessary belt tightening. After seeing the scandalous health statistics of the Wichi it would be logical to think that the belt tightening has to be done somewhere else! But one never knows what can happen in this blessed land...



In the next 20 days I have to have some sort of answer. Will the government carry on with their support or will they look some other way? I will let you know what happens.



## **Conclusions**

1. There is no sure support from the government yet. Please pray that our 2 year project will be aproved fast. Your support is still needed.
2. We have got to the end of our "Garden Godparents" project. We hope many of them can carry on supporting their "Godsons". Thank you all for getting involved.
3. We are working towards the reduction of the differences in all social statistics (health, education, life expectancy, access to work, etc) between the Wichi and the general public of the country. Pray that a long term plan can be set up that will be followed by all governments in the future, regardless of the political party they belong to, to close this unacceptable gap.
4. Many many thanks to you for your continued support and prayers. God Bless you.

Alec Deane

0054 387 5096482

[alecdeane@yahoo.com](mailto:alecdeane@yahoo.com)

[fundacion.siwok@yahoo.com](mailto:fundacion.siwok@yahoo.com)

