



Fighting child anemia in Peru with the "Mothers of Iron"

In 2011, more than 63% of children under two in Ventanilla (Peru) suffered from anemia and were at high risk of malnutrition.

To combat this situation, we joined forces with the United Nations World Food Programme to launch an educational program aimed at improving the nutritional levels of the most vulnerable members of society, particularly pregnant women and children under five years of age.

The objective is to improve families' health-related habits and get women in Ventanilla to participate in informative workshops about food and nutrition, where they learn to prepare iron-rich meals.

Once trained, these very mothers can become Community Advisors.

Melita: It is down to the community advisors to follow up on whether children are taking the ferrous sulfate and the anemia treatment the doctor has given them. I feel that I have helped to improve the eating habits and the health of the children in my area.

In 2017, this program endorsed the opening of the first community center for preparing children's food, in Ventanilla.

Here, mothers put the skills that they have learned at the workshops into practice and sell iron-rich, low-cost foods. This benefits more than 110 children under five every week.

By 2016, after four years of the program, we had managed to reduce anemia in children under five by 23%, falling from an initial 52% to 29%.

Thanks to this program, the eating habits of over 3,000 families in the Ventanilla area has improved over the last six years.