

# Communal libraries in the rural areas of Peru

A report from Luz Maria Sanchez Hurtado, ARC•PEACE Peru

The communal libraries are located North of Lima. We got a piece of land from the local government of the Barranca Province. Most of the children belong to the rural and some come from the urban area. There are 22,750 children between 5 and 15 years living in the Barranca Province. The participation of the local government in the development process of the construction of communal libraries is important. The project follows a participatory budget of the local government to obtain affordability and sustainability.

## Education of children

Our role as architects is to build grassroots capacity for the population to start a hurricane-resistant housing construction program, and to involve the community in the whole process. Since it is a communal program we must involve not only of the grassroots people in the area but also the local government, for instance in education.

The communal library will be used for children from 5 to 14 years old. Due to the dimensions (25 square meters each unit) the idea is to achieve a step-by-step construc-



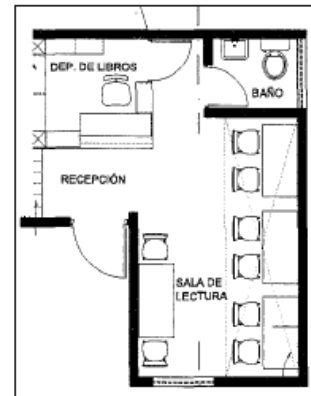
tion and to build one unit in each district so that all districts benefit from the experience in the Barranca Province. When the population is trained it will be possible to start construction according to their requirements.

## Long-term capacity building

During the process of training women and men will learn how to produce concrete modules using the exact proportions of cement, sand, small stones

and water. The quality control is important to be able to sell the products. Training is important in to achieve sustainability of the program. The Local government must support these programs through the Participatory Budget and stimulate the involvement of the population in the program. Environment factors are focused to obtain a maximum saving in electric energy and an adequate reduction of external noise

The libraries are built of walls with concrete blocks and we propose the use of the prefabricated roof to use for domes and concrete beams produced by the population in the training process. The grassroot people get the whole benefit during the production of the concrete elements and the construction of housing units as well.



*Plan of library Carolina Multiuso, Peru.*

*Luz Maria Sanchez Hurtado*