

In their own words...

Peru: The accident that changed Braulio's life

Braulio, 14-year-old boy, like many other children in La Rinconada, had worked in the mine since he was very young, carrying heavy loads of ore and as a *quimbalatero*, or stone crusher. When he was 13, he says, "One day I didn't feel well, I was very tired and fell down a few times while I was working. At the exit from the mine my barrow overturned and all the ore fell out. The captain was watching me. He kicked me hard because of this."

Braulio had heard about the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) project for the mines in Rinconada, which had been reaching out to the community through its partner organization, CARE. "I had heard about it on the radio. I decided to contact the project. They came to the mine and talked to the mine manager, and he was sanctioned. After that I only worked for one more month, helping to take care of the owner's warehouse."

The IPEC project in La Rinconada aims to strengthen and expand health, education, nutrition and other services, as well as to improve the working conditions of adult miners. Awareness-raising is also a priority. When Braulio, his brothers and their father began to attend meetings organized by the project, "We learned that working was not good for us. I had aches and pains, sometimes we didn't eat well, and it was difficult to go to school and study. Now we are in a better situation. We know more and want to move ahead and be successful in our lives."

Braulio's father now understands how important it is to offer a better future for his children. "My father was very grateful and told them that from now on only he would work, and that we could devote ourselves to school." Over 2,500 children

have been helped by the IPEC/CARE project, which is working towards the progressive elimination of child labour in artisanal mines. The local community supports this goal and has increased its vigilance over child labour, to keep other children from sharing Braulio's experience in the mines.

