Yuspagara means Thank You in Aymara, the official and native language of millions of indigenous people in the Andean region. Every day, hundreds of indigenous families in Bolivia express how much it means to them to have something as simple as access to clean water and to improve their food security. Thanks to your support, QBL has been able to impact so many lives of indigenous people in El Altiplano region of Bolivia. Next year QBL will be working on five important projects. In order to implement them successfully, QBL continues to need your support, perhaps more than ever.

Two are water and sanitation projects in two indigenous communities: Palcoma Baja and Colque Alta located in the Province of Pacajes in La Paz. Your support is being leveraged by contributions from several other donors. QBL has partnered with Rotary Clubs including: Hobbs, Carlsbad Rotary Club (both in New Mexico) and San Jorge, as well as District 5520 (New Mexico), District 4690 (Bolivia) and the Rotary Foundation. These projects have also enjoyed financial support from individual Rotarians and the Southeast New Mexico Cycling (a nonprofit organization) whose board is comprised entirely of Rotarians. These communities will finally have access to clean and safe water as a result of this wonderful support!

The two rural communities have never enjoyed local access to water. This project will be life-changing for more than 200 people. The Province of Pacajes is one of the most vulnerable rural areas in Bolivia since it is located in El Altiplano, the Bolivian Andean Plateau with an elevation of 12,800 feet. The two villages are isolated and their inhabitants desperately need access to safe drinking water, especially during the dry season (May-October) when water is especially scarce and often only found in locations far from the villages.

Villages in El Altiplano typically suffer from a lack of sanitation and water infrastructure, leaving the communities vulnerable to water-related health problems. Families face many challenges related to changing weather patterns causing drought for long periods of time and, negatively impacting agriculture and the livelihoods of inhabitants. Far too many children and adults become sick and/or die from diarrhea and other infectious diseases as a result of contaminated drinking water.

FACT: According to UNICEF, almost 90% of child deaths from diarrheal diseases are directly linked to contaminated water, lack of sanitation, and/or inadequate hygiene. In Bolivia, diarrhea is the third leading cause of morbidity and mortality in children under 5 years of age.

Meet the families of Palcoma Baja and Colque Alta
By QBL-UK team

The two field workers based at the QBL office in La Paz are amazingly productive, despite many significant obstacles routinely encountered in their day-to-day work. Projects are usually located in remote places in the high Bolivian Altiplano which involves many hours of travel, sometimes on dirt roads. During the rainy season, journeys can be hazardous with poor road conditions and flooding. Snow and hail make travel virtually impossible at times. Indeed, hail is a particular problem on the Altiplano, especially for farmers raising crops. Bolivia is visibly affected by climate change: glaciers have melted, lakes have dried up, and there is recurring drought and flooding. This severely impacts the lives of the people with whom QBL works. Plans must often be reengineered and/or-scheduled because of adverse weather conditions, while also being sensitive to important cyclical farming dynamics.

The communities who benefit from QBL’s assistance invest considerable time producing proposals for projects that will meet their needs. Each community is intimately involved in addressing all essential aspects of their project. Although this can be a lengthy process it can result in positive side benefits: community development skills are enhanced and a sense of ownership of the project is nurtured. Once proposals and detailed budgets have been completed, they are submitted to Municipal Authorities in the Province of La Paz and to QBL UK or QBL USA for funding. This is not a speedy process because delays can typically arise in the review process. Even when a project is apparently complete problems can arise. Leaks from water systems have to be checked and fixed, follow-up visits are routinely necessary, further tests are typically made to assure every-thing is as it should be. The fact that projects are successfully completed is a tribute to the persistence and commitment of the communities and the QBL team.

**Your support is urgently needed.** We depend on your generosity! Your individual donations to this cause have been diminishing. We cannot continue this important work without your continued help. Demands on our resources are outpacing contributions to QBL-US. We must increase donations to keep these important projects moving forward. Your contributions will significantly aid our water projects while enhancing agricultural aid and other support services QBL provides for indigenous Aymaran people. New sources of funding recently secured can only be used for direct project costs, but we depend on your generosity to support the technical expertise needed to design, oversee installation, and provide post-construction monitoring and technical assistance. **Please donate now at: [http://qbl.org/donate/](http://qbl.org/donate/)**

With appreciation and gratitude,
Board of QBL-US