

## **Meetings with Community Banks, Organizations and Unions in Peru.**

### **Introduction Notes:**

Includes explanations and examples on the development and operation of "Choba-Choba" (You help me, I help You' community groups or teams) referred to in dialogue as "banks".

Banks are key to organised empowerment, to which our money is allocated by our former partner, IDPA . Copies of bank reports are issued to all members of the community bank.

The "Choba-Choba" banks were formed out of community women's organisations, such as Community Soup Kitchens, Mothers' Clubs, and Milk Distribution Clubs, which were the only organisations not shut down during the Fujimori dictatorship in the mid 1990s in the Amazon region of the country. The formation of these banks was a project of local non governmental organisations, such as the Institute for Development and Peace in the Amazon, IDPA. After receiving training, the bank officers decide on projects, and credit is issued to families belonging to the community bank. It is based on a credit system which is only rolled over into the next round, when the family's work is reviewed and approved.

One of the main challenges encountered by the NGO's when organising community groups is to change the perceptions of men in the community. The arduous task of overcoming scepticism and inherent chauvinism by men about projects initiated by women, is won with education, perseverance, patience and the development of mutual respect.

**The following notes and statements are condensed versions of dialogue and communication which occurred in scheduled meetings, during May 24 and June2.**