

Partnership America Latina (PAL)

with the Little Sisters of the Assumption

Newsletter Christmas 2021

Wishing all our readers a very Happy Christmas!

Greeting to all our supporters!

This newsletter gives information about the effects of the amazing work you have supported during 2021. The pandemic has had very negative effects, yet the projects helped by your donations have shown great flexibility and initiative in finding other ways of continuing to work with the poorest people. There are stories of change written by people who have benefited directly from your support. There are also profiles of some of the PAL volunteers without whose support we could not continue this work and to whom we say a big Thank You. PAL has no employees, all are volunteers.

Empowerment through Educational out-of-school support.

Many of the projects you are supporting are focused on childrens' out-of-school education. During the lockdown, the projects continued offering educational support through Whats App, Zoom, Meet, and other social media. They embraced all of these challenges wholeheartedly so that those who suffer most, would not be ever further left behind during the lockdown.

Skills training

A project in Colombia which focuses on skills training for mothers who are heads of households and on unemployed youth, had to make huge adaptations to continue the training via Whats app. Another obstacle was transport as the buses went on strike, and there were many street demonstrations. Happily they managed to complete their training and gain their certificates in Waitressing and Bar Attendant skills. 50% gained employment in businesses where they had done their placements.

Coping with COVID in health provision.

In Madagascar the health project was extremely busy due to the already very fragile public health system being stretched by COVID. Our staff had no PPE so thanks to your support they were able to buy it. They were also able to give hygiene kits and food hampers to many very needy families.

Without your support and that of Miseen Cara, none of this work would have been possible. On behalf of all the people who are benefiting from the work of these projects, we say a very sincere and heart-felt thank you! May God reward you for your kindness to the most needy people of our world.



Hallo, I'm Bride Counihan, a Little Sister of the Assumption, living in Cork. Having spent 17 years in the semi-desert of Brazil, the Congregation asked me to come back to Ireland to do the work of fund-raising for our overseas missions. As well as doing Mission Appeals speaking in Churches at the weekends, I also put requests to some organizations which support overseas development work. One of these has an interesting approach to fund-raising. If they approve a request I make to them, they guarantee that for every euro I raise, they will match it with 3 euros. So that is a great incentive for the fund-raising because every euro you donate can become 4 euros! I deeply appreciate the support of all of our donors, especially our long-standing PAL donors and the PAL committee which keeps contact with the overseas work and produces this newsletter as well as keeping the accounts in order.

Due to COVID, instead of the Postal Raffle, we are using this newsletter to ask you to continue your generous support to our missions.

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TESTIMONY OF A CEPA ALUMNUS

CEPA is the Assumption Centre for Popular Education, situated in the city of Caruaru, north east Brazil. It was set up by the Little Sisters of the Assumption and some local community leaders 18 years ago. It was my second home where I spent my childhood, where I made friends for life. My name is Jonatha Manoel, and I'm 20 years old. During these 15 years I've been with CEPA, I started in the homework support group, then basic computer science, meta recycling, theater until I found myself in the audio visual workshop. I remember the first time I held the camera that Cepa had just bought. It was love at first sight. I knew I could learn that not only as a hobby, but also for the professional side. Through my love of photography, and through the workshops that Cepa provided me, I was helped to find myself and know what I want for my life. I know that CEPA has helped not only me, but many other children, teenagers and young people who passed through there. Gratitude, this is the word that summarizes my feeling for Cepa, for everything they did for me, my family and so many friends.



CIEP

The CIEP project is in the city of Arequipa, Peru. It is an after-school project which offers children and adults supplementary educational supports.

At CIEP (ESTEBAN PERNET CENTER) we look after the needs of children and adolescents. We work all together in order to achieve a real change in their lives.

“Being at CIEP for me is very helpful and I feel so peaceful here. At my former school my teacher bullied me, she says to me I wasn't good enough to be at school.

When I met the coordinator of CIEP, Charito, she helped me to change school. Here they treat me so well, I have been learning plenty of stuff beneficial for my life and since I attended CIEP my life has changed. I am better in mathematics, communication and I score good result. My teacher, Guido helps me with my homework and guides me. My mom doesn't longer yell at me.

I am happy, I don't cry anymore, and I love to play football, I am the goalkeeper.

At CIEP they also care about my health, they took me to the doctor as I was slim and small for my age. They also help me with food to be able to study, every day I sent them through WhatsApp what I am eating to show them I am eating well”



We would like to remind our readers of PAL's ethos of voluntary service so all monies collected by PAL go directly to Projects. We have no employees.

MEET SOME OF OUR VOLUNTEERS

I am very happy to be a correspondent for the CEPA project, to be able to support and collaborate in such a wonderful initiative which helps so many children and teenagers from a vulnerable area of Brazil, especially at the time of the current pandemic and political uncertainty in the country. I have worked 6 years at PAL and during this time I have had the opportunity to visit the project which was a wonderful experience to see the positive impact of the valuable work carried out. I am so proud to be part of the PAL team.” Vinicius Castanha



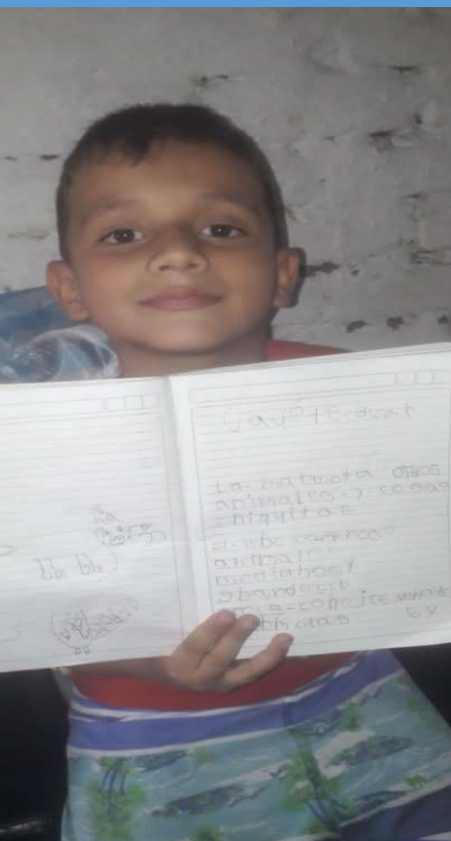
I am Katia, a Spanish teacher and I am from Panama, living in Ireland since 2016. I joined PAL as correspondent, to translate messages and correspondence from Spanish to English with different projects in Peru and from which I have learned a lot.

I am very happy to contribute as part of a wonderful team. Thank you for letting me be part of it.

My name is Ana and I am the correspondent for Cesoles, a lovely project that has been building human community and solidarity with children, young people, women, men and their families for over 13 years in Colombia.

It gives me a lot of satisfaction to think that I am using my languages to help such a wonderful project even though only by making the process of getting grants from Miseen Cara easier.

ICovid has delayed some of Cesoles projects but I think they are well able to get back on track very soon. I am looking forward to continuing helping them for as long as I can.



Antonieta Fage Corporation, (CORFAGE)

CORFAGE is a community-based project in a very disadvantaged area of the city of Cali, Colombia. Children between 6 and 15 years of age attend to improve their reading, writing and logical and numerical thinking. They also develop playful pedagogical intervention strategies that allow them to demonstrate gradual progress in the learning processes.

All the children who benefit from the Project attend school regularly but have some difficulties in their academic and socio-emotional performance that can be overcome with homework support and psychopedagogical and family accompaniment. Some have a cognitive diagnosis and attend therapies. Others are waiting for a diagnosis and other children have emotional or social needs due to sources of conflicts at home, problems of coexistence at school or difficult events. **CORFAGE** respects the pace of learning of each child. Over time this allows us to see the results and progress resulting from perseverance and motivation in the processes of teaching and learning.

SERCOLDES

The Foundation for Social Development Services in Colombia (SERCOLDES) specializes in training of women community leaders

Inés Duque, 54, and Ruth Gema Gómez Ibarra, 55, are two leaders who, work as monitors of the project "Food Autonomy from popular knowledge" which benefits 150 women from 6 Municipal areas of Colombia. This project is carried out by the Sercoldes Foundation, with the support of PAL and Mísean Cara from Ireland.

Inés is a preschool assistant and is part of the Coalition of Social Movements and Organizations of Colombia. Inés has concentrated her work in the capital of Colombia promoting prevention of gender violence, food autonomy and urban home gardens. She says that the project strengthens her in her shared knowledge and that the beneficiaries feel that they are not alone and that they can count on many others to help them move forward.

Gemita is a food technologist, a teacher of business management and agriculture, as well as a promoter of rural women's enterprises. She is part of the Mesa Municipal de Mujeres de Gualmatán, Nariño and has designed methodologies to promote food security through home gardens. She is proud to continue expanding her experience with many women's organizations that call her Sabedora Mayor.

The Sercoldes Foundation, about to celebrate 50 years of support to communities in the country generates, with the project supported from Ireland, awareness of the importance of food autonomy as a right, food production for households, improvement of nutritional and agricultural practices, which are healthy and organic. In recent times it has focused on the use of knowledge in traditional medicine and native cuisine, through virtual media. This resulted in strengthening relationships and support networks between women from social organizations.



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HAPPY CHILD PROJECT

I am Luzia, and I have been a part of the "Happy Child Project" run by the community association in Umburanas. When I was 3 years old, I started pre-school there and after two years I joined the homework support class. I remember our games in the free space of the school, the field classes on the communal farm, the computer classes, the embroidery classes, the movie sessions with popcorn, the painting activities and the visits to the Municipal Library. I remember with nostalgia an exchange program with the students of another village, where we climbed the hills which offered a beautiful view, and played a tournament.

On a school trip away, I presented a poem about my town Umburanas, and after this I started to present my work at school without inhibition, since I was a shy girl. Over the years, I developed other skills: canvas painting, participated in workshops at CRAS, plaster paintings, embroidery in cross-stitch, handicrafts in felt, capoeira, guitar, dance. Also I attended formative lectures, which enabled me to learn about various topics: sexuality, education, coexistence, respect for others, environment, rights of children and adolescents, walk in support of women, lectures on suicide and on breast cancer.

Today, I am a young woman who takes part in the Association's board of directors, contributing voluntarily as secretary to the project's Board of Directors. I give back with joy, to the 'Happy Child Project' that has helped so much in my personal, social and educational formation. I am grateful to God for having the opportunity to help others. I have become a mother, I have my family and I can face the difficulties of life. I think of continuing my studies to ensure my family a better future.

2021 has been a difficult year with the Covid-19 virus. Unfortunately for PAL it has meant no opportunities to hold fundraising events and additional appeals from some of our projects.

If you would like to send a donation to PAL this Christmas;

Cheques can be sent to: - PAL, Little Sisters of the Assumption, 42 Rathfarnham Rd, Terenure, Dublin D6W NY67

Or lodged directly to our bank account: PAL at AIB, Account No 04846553 IBAN: IE34 AIBK 9313 3004 8465 53 BIC: AIBKIE2D