

Annual Activities Update. Ayuda Directa 31-12-2008



Beloved friends, we present to you a synthesis of the activities carried out by Ayuda Directa, Ecuador in 2008. As with every year, this occasion marks our profound gratefulness to everyone who has contributed towards the continuation of our work in a climate of solidarity and confidence. Year after year, the experience and the strong friendships that unite us all, have allowed Ayuda Directa to both consolidate and grow. We remain faithful to our vision of an organizational structure characterized by agility, transparency, and a lack of bureaucracy in which one works directly with the people. I invite you all to read these few pages of activities we were fortunate enough to carry out this past year.

Best Wishes, Michele THANKS.

Programa Guagua



Luis writes a letter to his godmother

Throughout the past year, this support program has reached a higher level of organizational stability, to the extent that we have increased the number of beneficiaries who participate in this initiative. By the end of 2008, nearly 352 Ecuadorian students received a scholarship. Our program is directed towards families in need, while simultaneously rewarding students who show a greater commitment to their academic pursuits and achievements.



Moments in an art workshop with recycled materials in Esmeraldas

2008 brought about educational activities carried out in diverse regions throughout Ecuador. Here are some examples of the program activities:

- Art with garbage and recycled mediums
- Sexual Education
- Personal Hygiene
- Domestic Violence/Abuse prevention classes for parents



Milena and Gina, two girls who were successful with Programa Guagua

Since the commencement of *Programa Guagua* seven years ago, many children in the program have finished secondary school, others sought to continue their studies, and have seen some exceptional opportunities open up for them. We would like to share the experience of Gina and Milena (left photo), two children, who five years ago were in a family crisis, without the support of their father and mother who were in jail. With aid from *Programa Guagua*, but mostly from their own strength, they were both selected on December 9th 2008 for an educational scholarship in Russia. Gina and Milena are now attending the University of Moscow in Russia.



Volunteers in Guagua Convention

November 22, 2008 marked the annual meeting with all the local coordinators of *Programa Guagua*. This brought about an opportunity to socialize, to discuss changes and new features in the work surroundings, to plan future activities and, at the same time, to enjoy a pleasant weekend with our volunteers. The meeting took place in Punta Prieta, a village located in the province of Manabí on the Pacific coast.

We are currently updating our website to grant access to sponsor information, photos and letters from his/her godson. This will allow a faster exchange of information and reduced costs.



NOTE: You can send letters, messages or gifts to your children that could be delivered directly or through the following contact person: Mario Cola Via Vette Alpine Alpine, 4 Valdidentro 23038 (SO) Italia.

If you want to send gifts, make sure that they are small because volunteers who come to Ecuador bring them and the space in the suitcase is generally limited. Thank you!

InfoGuagua

Our regular newsletter to our children



Project Esperanza - Sustainable Development



Computer course in Riobamba, many schools were covered by our project



Delivery of a computer in Reten



Opening the new basketball court in La Esperanza



Principals of secondary schools gathered of the presentation of the draft improving food project



Deliver of dining tables in Toropamba



Maintenance work in the school kitchen in La Esperanza

Project Esperanza was launched in 2002, aimed at constantly improving the living conditions of the population living in the indigenous Kichwa community of La Esperanza. The program has currently expanded to six other villages in Colta in the Province of Chimborazo, which is considered the poorest area of Ecuador, lacking basic services like clean water, good education and access to healthcare.

IMPROVING EDUCATION PROJECT

February 23, 2008 marked the ceremony commemorating the arrival of 28 computers at the Hall of the Provincial Council of Chimborazo in Riobamba. A collaboration of the Rotary Club West Quito (Ecuador), the Rotary Club Contea Bormio (Italy) and the Rotary Foundation provided funds towards a computer distribution project to improve rural education in schools with large needs. In Chimborazo, thirty schools in total (1566 students) received the equipment and among these, 14 have been equipped with sports facilities (courts for soccer and basketball).

DRAFT FOR IMPROVING NUTRITION CHAKRAS PROJECT

In December 2008, we began a project to improve nutrition and health of children of 13 schools in Colta (Chimborazo). The project involves a partnership between Ayuda Directa, CEMOPLAF (Center for Medical Orientation and Family Planning) and the Provincial Directorate of Intercultural and Bilingual Education Riobamba (DINEIB). The project is directed towards engaging adolescents in both theoretical and practical issues pertaining to agriculture, livestock, the environment, and improvement of health. Recovery of ancestral knowledge is a major objective. Each school will use an area of land where they will carry out practical work in agriculture using organic systems, the recovery of native seeds, and remembering indigenous rituals that are fast disappearing.

SUMMER PROJECT

During the summer months, we can count on the participation of volunteers from prestigious universities such as: Reed College in Portland - Oregon - U.S., the University of California, Berkeley - U.S. The Universidad San Francisco de Quito - Ecuador. Thanks to the cooperation and help of other volunteers we were able to work on the following activities:

- Construction of a solar panel in the showers of School of La Esperanza
- Construction of ecological stoves. This activity has been carried out on an experimental basis—it will dramatically change the way of cooking so we are waiting for a response from families.
- Construction of a community kitchen in the village of Lupaxi Bajo
- Preparing gardens/chakras for use among communities, primary, and secondary schools
- Maintenance of the School of La Esperanza

AYUDA means for us to create conditions for a better life and, above all, to generate capacity in people so they can be their own agents of development and change. We place emphasis on the training of local people in effort to disseminate knowledge learned in the village (and we learned a lot from them as well!). We have also intensified relations with other local institutions working in the same territory. Thus we have better coordination and management of the operations carried out both in the social, environmental, economic and cultural development.



On March 11, 2008 began in some indigenous peoples of Colta a series of **natural and traditional medicine** in order to recover traditional knowledge and use of numerous medicinal plants in the field.



The early stages of construction of the communal kitchen in Lupaxi Bajo



The construction of a small nursery for planting native trees



Second edition of the race for the friendship mountains



Moments of the medical brigade in towns of Chimborazo



House visit to a patient



Kids attending a soccer course

MICRO CREDIT

Satisfaction continues with the microcredits which began in 2003 in La Esperanza. Providing small loans with low interest ensures that families can have credit to improve their quality of life and initiate productive activity. Currently, 100% of the families we have worked with have paid back their debts. At the end of 2008, 90 families have benefitted from these funds.

MOUNTAIN RACE

Saturday, August 9, 2008 in La Esperanza marked the second race in the mountains called Mashiyashun Kashpashpa, which means the Race of Friendship in Kichwa.

The route took place about 10 km on roads and trails, at an altitude of between 3200 to 3800 meters above sea level.

63 people from surrounding communities and Ayuda Directa volunteers participated in the competition. Prizes included: 8 sheep, 8 pigs, 8 hoes, shovels.

HEALTH

Although the Government has greatly improved the situation in the Pediatric Hospital Baca Ortiz in Quito, with new ambulances and a CT scan, patients' needs do not cease. In 2008, Ayuda Directa helped 328 children through the provision of nearly \$ 20,000. The amount of which was used for tests, medicine and partial funding of surgery. The majority of cases consisted of patients suffering from pneumonia and children with severe burns, most of whom reside in Quito and the province of Esmeraldas.

In addition, we have helped people with various levels of health problems amounting to a total of \$ 2,365.

In 2008, we organized the following medical activities:

- June 2008 La Esperanza - first aid course with Dr. Paula Anne Newman (USA)
- August, 2008 La Esperanza, Vaquería Rodeo, Lupaxi Chico, prov. Chimborazo, medical consultations with Dr. Enzo Bertamini (Italy)

Hogar San Vicente de Paul Quito Casa Manuel Perez Ibarra

Up until July, a dance course was carried out with the children of Orfanage of San Vicente de Paul de Quito while presently continuing the soccer course. Those attending the soccer course were: Pablo Vasquez, David Alvarado, Juan Santos, Walter Luzuriaga, Bolivar Hernandez and Roberto Paredes.

We are maintaining the support of Juan Carlos Santos, Luisa and Andrea Bustamante Bustamante, in the transitional period between the orphanage and an independent life.



On July 1st, through the collaboration of Paula Anne, Kevin, Diana, Robin, Jake and Juniper, the children of the primary school in La Esperanza went on a field trip highlighting nutrition, community, and the environment to Salinas de Bolivar, an Andean town after the arrival of Mato Grosso in 1970. The Salesian priest Antonio Polo has had an exemplary process of development with the establishment of micro enterprises and cooperatives.



Salinas de Bolivar, children attending the soccer ball cooperative



Christmas celebration on December 22 in La Esperanza. A Christmas carols contest was organized, including a raffle and a lunch at noon for about 300 people present.

Project Chone

Thanks to funding by the Association Light of Tivoli (Rome), we began working on the renovation of a classroom of the school "Juntos Venceremos" in Chone to help children with disabilities. The classroom will be equipped to carry out physiotherapy and should be delivered in early 2009.



Phases of classroom construction in the school of Chone (Province of Manabi)



Marcos, a child with a new wheelchair donated by Ruth. In Chone (Province of Manabí), there is a high rate of people with disabilities.



Fundraising Activities

Ayuda Directa is financed mainly through private initiatives and efforts of our dear friends who have made all of these activities possible:

In 2008, a historical house in the town of Valdisotto (So) was restored.

The proceeds from the sale will be distributed to 4 groups:

- St. Mary's Hospital Lacor in Uganda
- Hospital of the Central African Republic
- Ayuda Directa Ecuador
- Accommodation "La Sorgente" in Valdisotto (SO), Day Center for Disabled.



In November, the presence of Enrica and Danilo brought several days of fun. For many children, it was the first opportunity to see magic and juggling numbers and share the joy of the two volunteers.

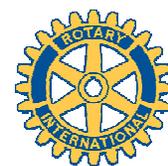
- 7-8 December, Christmas markets - Bormio (SO)
- October, Bormiadi 2008 Bormio (SO)
- October, the team's "La Esperanza" in Bormiadi
- October 4 Marriage of Barbara and Marco
- August 24 Golf Tournament for charity - Bormio (SO)
- August 16 concert of 'La Esperanza' Piazza Kuerc - Bormio (SO)
- August 16 Flea Market - Bormio (SO)
- August 15, Concert "La Esperanza" Symphony falling nine stars "- Isolaccia (SO)
 - August 3, Crafts Market - Santa Caterina (So)
- August 2, Concert 'La Esperanza' - Auditorium S. Antonio Valfurva (SO)
- July 26, Concert "La Esperanza" Symphony falling nine stars "- Isolaccia (SO)
- July 20, Concert 'La Esperanza' Piazza Kuerc - Bormio (SO)
- July 20 Flea Market - Bormio (SO)
- May 11 Concert of 'La Esperanza' - Valfurva (SO)
- 25 and April 26 Concert of 'La Esperanza' - in Grosio and Bormio (SO)
- March-April, Spring Lottery - Bormio (SO)
- February, fund-raising activities in Portland Oregon, USA



Christmas Market 2008 at the Pentagon in Bormio



Bormiadi always working with us



Thanks to support from the Rotary Club, many projects have been undertaken in Ecuador

NEW WEBSITE Thanks to Daniele Genetti, www.gdworld.eu, in 2008, the site was completely restructured, allowing better access to the pages.

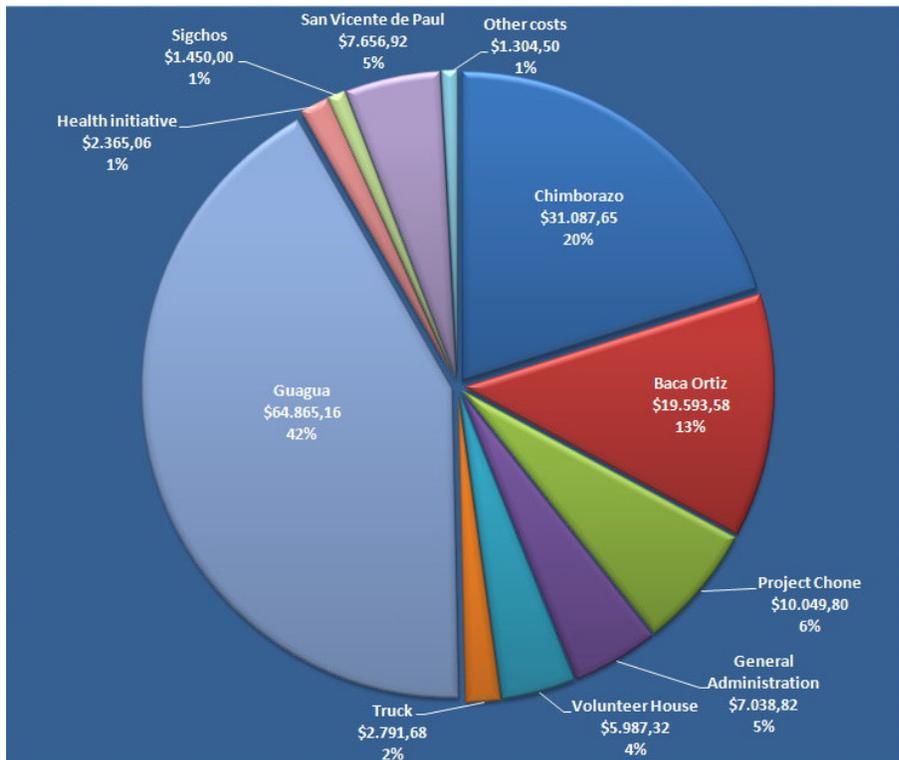
Lets talk about numbers



We hope we don't get a ticket! Our car, which has lasted four and a half years and has travelled 175,000 kilometres allows greater safety (aside from the photo above) and travel efficiency.

Our resources are distributed in three main projects (see chart below):

- Guagua, support distance education: 42%. This project is supported through fees paid annually by donors.
- Chimborazo, sustainable development: 20%. Not including the microcredit portion disbursed in the year (\$ 12,760) and return to our coffers, the proportion of resources allocated to the project was 13%.
- Hospital Baca Ortiz, medical assistance: 13%.
- Volunteer House and Administration: 8.45%. If we consider the the repayments made by the volunteers (\$1946.11) to this rate decreases to 7.19%.



GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

Our goal has always been to keep administrative costs to a minimum. This year, administrative costs consisted of 4.6% of our overall costs. This cost covers the salaries of two women who work part time at our office in Quito.

For further information visit our website www.ayudadirecta.org or contact us by email info@ayudadirecta.org

If you are interested in becoming a member of Ayuda Directa, as a way to remain closer to our activities, you can join. The annual fee is 15 euros. For more information or to renew your membership, please contact: mario.cola@ayudadirecta.org

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AYUDA DIRECTA PHILOSOPHY

Ayuda Directa is an independent, non-profit, organization formed by a network of friends of different nationalities, which supports the development and improvement of the life conditions of people in an efficient, transparent, and sustainable way. At the same time, Ayuda Directa ensures that the benefits of its projects go directly towards beneficiaries. We use reliable methods that respect local and cultural values that contribute to human development, environmental awareness, and improving the quality of life.



*We hope that 2009 is full of smiles!
Thank you for being a part of our network of solidarity!*