



FRIENDS OF ALALAY (SANTA CRUZ)

Registered charity no. 1123425

WINTER 2014 NEWSLETTER

As highlighted in recent newsletters, because Alalay is currently facing some significant financial difficulties, our income-generating projects (such as the carpentry workshop) are now all the more vital. In addition, as well as continuing to finance six existing vocational training students, we are about to fund another eight adolescent boys (like Joel here, who is about to begin a mechanics' course) through a variety of courses and are waiting to hear what the girls wish to study.



The building of the drop-in centre for adolescents still living on the streets progresses, but we have had to make the sad decision, jointly with Alalay, to postpone the construction of the second floor.

This area would have housed our oldest boys, providing a much better environment in a separate, age-specific space where they would have prepared to become independent. Instead, for the moment, we are going to concentrate on refurbishing existing buildings. For example, the boys' welcome house is in a terrible state. It hasn't been properly maintained for a number of years, and in particular, the toilet and washing area is unsanitary. There are constant drainage problems and the smell of waste water often filters into the house. This building is such an important resource for encouraging children to leave the streets (being the first place to which they come), that offering them an attractive home is fundamental to our work. Also, for the time being it will continue to accommodate the oldest boys who would otherwise have benefitted from the new aforementioned space. We are very pleased to be financing its refurbishment over the next few months.

If you've seen my website recently, you may already know about some more exciting news at Alalay. Firstly, at the start of September, Bolivian President Evo Morales came to Santa Cruz to officially open our new socio-sporting schools, financed by the Real Madrid Football Foundation and implemented by Alalay.



The schools have already been very successful in La Paz and El Alto, directly benefiting 500 children and young people, and having an indirect impact on another 2,000 in both cities. Through playing football the youngsters work to cover certain "life skills", including social interactions, their rights, education, and physical and technical prowess. As part of the official opening in Santa Cruz, ex-players of the Real Madrid team played a friendly match against a team composed of players from Bolivia's 1994 World Cup team and President Morales.

Secondly, Alalay's regional co-ordinator was one of the main organisers of the International Street Workers' Conference. The event brought together a large number of people, including representatives from the Bolivian Government and various international/national groups, all of whom work with children, young people and adults living on the streets. Establishing a relationship with these people is a key part of Alalay's mission. We are thrilled that they were so involved in organising such a brilliant conference and very excited to hear about the ideas that stemmed from the discussions!

In the UK we also have some exciting events planned over the next few months, including: a stall at Doynton village tabletop sale this Saturday 22nd November (10:30am – 1pm), where we will be selling lots of items handmade by the Alalay children alongside a variety of new goodies, all perfect for Christmas presents! Then, on 10th December the "Musical and Amicable Society" will be returning to give another wonderful concert on period instruments. The concert starts at 7:30pm at Cotham Parish Church, BS6 6DR and promises to be a fantastic evening.



We have just received the beautiful handpainted Christmas card designs from Bolivia and they are available for sale. Please buy them at the above events or contact us directly to order some – the supply is limited, so they will sell out soon!

Annie Syrett, Bristol – November 2014

www.alalay.co.uk